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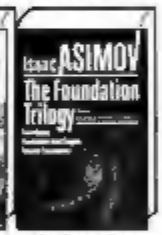

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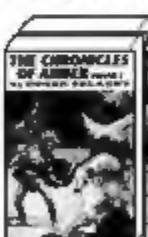

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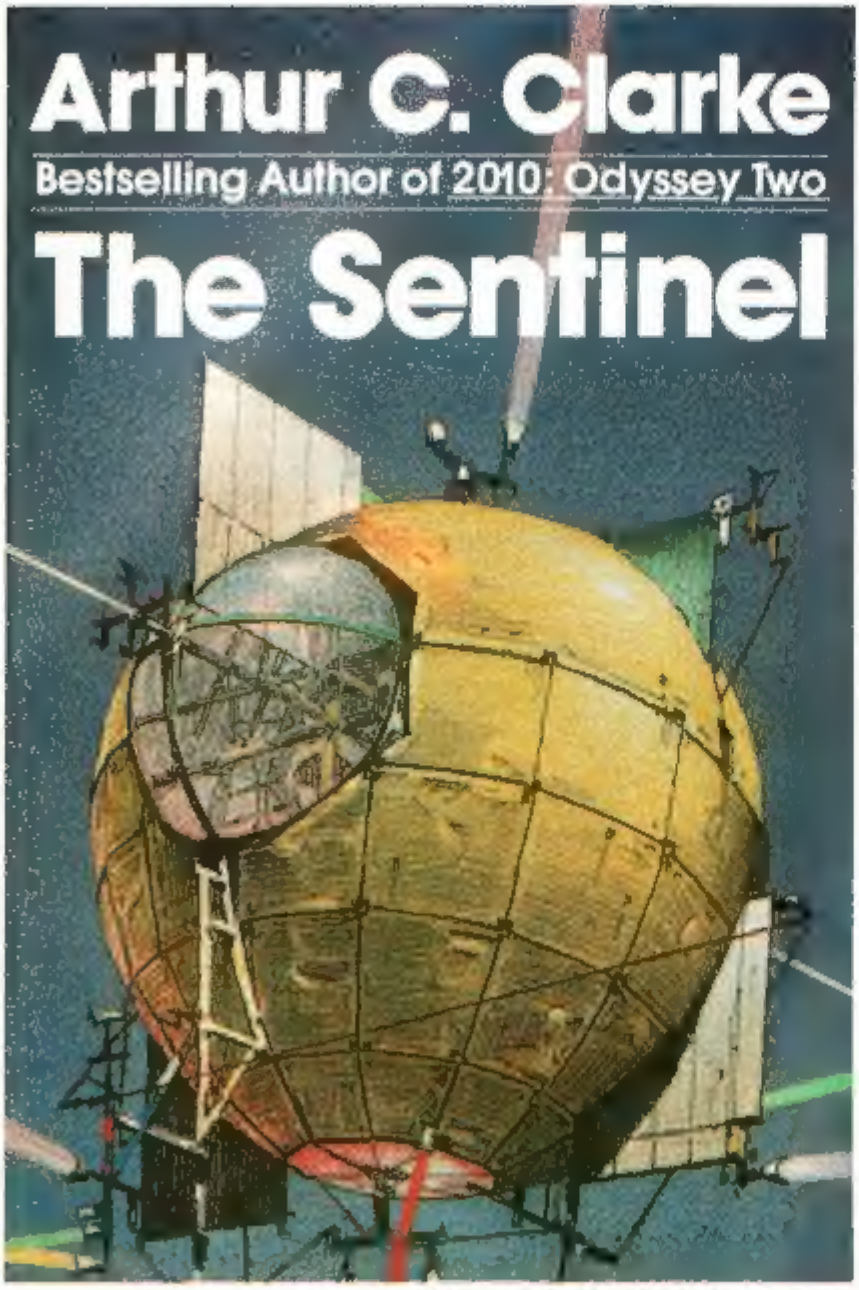

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DOSSIER

It's not exactly a class act when a magazine has to apologize, and beg for forgiveness, and lick the boots of its readers. We are in one of those very predicaments.

Turn to the cover. Pretty girl . . . Stephen King's new book . . . Liberatore's guts . . . Eurythmics and Yello . . . Swarte . . . WAT? Go back to Eurythmics and Yello. Where are they? Well, they're not in this issue, that's for damned sure. I'd love to say that the manuscript drifted off into Never-neverland because of the combination of acid rain, the wind-chill factor, and Reagan's recent trip to NYC, but that would be lying.

Fact is, a band of thieves broke into our offices and stole my autographed pix of Pee-Wee Herman, a brand new box of Kleenex (double strength), and the above-mentioned interview. If you crooks are reading this, I only pray that you don't confuse the article with a Kleenex.

—JR

STRANGERS ON THE BRAIN

The Children of the Damned is not only a seminal genre film's sequel; it's also an apt description of an entire generation of American filmmakers who grew up in the post-WWII era—a time of supposed ease and affluence that ironically produced a crop of children who, if not alien, were certainly alienated by the American Dream. Directors like John Carpenter, David Cronenberg, George Romero, Brian DePalma, Joe Dante, Wes Craven, Paul Schrader, and now Michael Laughlin all belong to this generation—and if their films have one thing in common, it's that they are all subversive.

These filmmakers thrived not on America's broad playing fields, but in her dark theaters, nourished by a steady diet of Jujubees and B-movies like *Invaders from Mars* and *Attack of the 50-Foot Woman*. For them, the middle-class dream was a nightmare of assassination and mass murder, a world where the shadows held rifles, where psychos with axes lurked behind every corner, and where the sky swarmed with UFOs. As if in fulfillment of those fifties films' prophecies, we have discovered—along with these filmmakers—that our children are aliens, and our parents pods. The America of the Children of the Damned glows in the dark; it's the land of Los Alamos, Love Canal, and Times Beach, a country where Son of Sam delivers the mail and the Avon Lady is from outer space.

A recent addition to the subversive canon is **Michael Laughlin's *Strange Invaders***, a quirky bit of retro-cinema about aliens who've taken over a small midwestern town, assumed the form of its inhabitants, and proceeded to live out their lives as humans. But they've made one mistake: they've forgotten to change with the times. Twenty-five years after the takeover, Centerville's families are still eating Kellogg's Corn Flakes, watching black-and-white TV, and driving DeSotos. As in his previous ***Strange Behavior***—a kind of *Hardy Boys Go to Hell*—Laughlin posits a separate reality to explain the freakishness of modern life. In *Strange Behavior*, a Mabuse-like mad scientist turns the neighborhood teenagers into wackos programmed to kill. In *Strange Invaders*, America is full of small towns peopled with malevolent aliens. This is a film in which an alien in the form of the incomparable Fiona Lewis rings the heroine's doorbell and says, "Avon calling."

—James Verniere

Oops! They told me not to scratch it!
Photo © Orion Pictures Corp.

HM: Were you an alienated child growing up in Minonk, Illinois?

ML: It's corny to say, but I'm sure that everybody who grew up after the bomb is different. A lot of people think that the fifties was the beginning of America. It's an idea that was sold to the American public after WWII. Of course, superficially it was a good time because everybody got *stuff*: colorful cars, clock radios, televisions— the things that make the fifties stylish and fun and goony. But at the same time the fifties was the beginning of the end.

HM: What do you remember most vividly of that era?

ML: Bomb drills and bomb shelters. In fact, I was once in Alan Ladd's bomb shelter. His daughter took me to see it, and there it was—this Beverly Hills bomb shelter with cots and canned food and a TV set, all done up smartly.

HM: What do you think influenced the genre films of the period?

ML: Well, the bomb was part of it. But they were also influenced by pure mythology—the idea of aliens from another shore. Another thing is that after the war America felt complacent. We beat the Germans and the Japs, so maybe we needed new creatures to defeat.

HM: To get back to the original question, were you an alienated child?

ML: Yes, I was an only child, so I found myself spending a lot of time with my imagination in this empty landscape. I used to read a lot of comic books that I kept in a trunk, and I remember taking these long automobile trips with my parents—who were Christian Scientists—across this almost lunar landscape that is Middle America.

Strange Invaders.
Another ordinary day in Centerville, Illinois.
Photo © Orion Pictures Corp.

The Invaders descend.
Photo © Orion Pictures Corp.

In the midwest, you always feel after a certain age that you want to get out. It seems so empty. It's sparse and uniform, and the people are standoffish. Families roll around on the floor with the dog, but not with each other. The interesting thing is that in *Strange Invaders* I've gone back to the land of my childhood, and I've discovered that there is a poetic mystery there in all that flat land.

HM: *Strange Invaders* is full of references to and resonances of other science-fiction films. For example, when you cast Kenneth Tobey as an alien leader, you must know that he's going to bring a lot of cinematic baggage with him. Why do that?

ML: First of all, in a broad sense, when I'm making a film about the fifties I try to avoid contemporary, neurotic actors. I try to use actors who fit the composition. Science-fiction films have rules of form and composition, and I try not to break those rules. I play with them and improvise.

HM: You also allude to *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, both by showing it on a television screen and in the design of the landing spacecraft.

ML: Well, I like very much the designer of that film, Lyle Wheeler, so I was influenced by his spacecraft. I also like the work of William Cameron Menzies, a designer who directed some films including *Invaders from Mars*. But we didn't slavishly copy anyone.

HM: But why make allusions to other films?

ML: I think they add another texture, and I don't think they're just dumb references. They trigger an emotional response.

HM: How did you determine the design of the mother ship?

ML: That is primarily the work of Susanna Moore, the designer. We researched the comic books and films of the period—everything, including a Three Stooges science-fiction film. The design of old juke boxes and those incredibly elaborate fifties cars was especially influential. I wanted the mother ship to look like an ocean liner from outer space—like the liner in *Amarcord* that comes looming out of the darkness. We also drew upon descriptions of UFOs and on drawings made by witnesses.

HM: What about the design of the aliens whom we see after they peel off their human skins?

ML: The idea was that they had arrived in 1958, so we tried to design a creature that was reminiscent of the films of that period. You spend so much time on the aliens in a film like this. They're like Greta Garbo. They have to be lit perfectly.

HM: What are your favorite science-fiction films of the fifties?

ML: Really all of them. I have them all on tape, and while I was preparing this film, I just ran them over and over. I had never seen *Attack of the 50-Foot Woman* until just recently though. Oddly enough, Paul Morrissey showed it to me because he wanted to do a re-make.

HM: The plot of *Strange Invaders*—to get back for a moment to influences—also recalls Gene Fowler, Jr.'s *I Married a Monster from Outer Space*.

ML: Yes, a great film with one of the perfect titles. Yes, in my film the hero has married a monster from outer space, and they even have a daughter. You see, one of the things you can do in a science-fiction film is take the idea of a bad marriage and turn it into something surrealistic. So you divorce your wife because she's a bug from outer space.

HM: Most critics described your previous film, *Strange Behavior*, as a parody of splatter movies. Is that how you perceive it?

ML: Not really, no. I perceived it in more classic terms as a kind of Dr. Mabuse transplanted to the American midwest.

HM: Will there be a third "Strange" film?

ML: Yes, we just finished the script last month. It's called *The Adventures of Phillip Strange*, and it's a spy film set in New York in the forties.

"Science fiction films have rules of form and composition, and I try not to break those rules. I play with them and improvise."

"*Skywalking* is strongest when depicting the business of Hollywood as business."

DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE

George Lucas (left) and Mark Hamill yak it up during the shooting of *Star Wars* (an obscure sf film from 1977).

Here's George Lucas, in *Rolling Stone*, on **Dale Pollock**'s ***Skywalking: The Life and Films of George Lucas*** (Harmony): "I think it's stupid to write a biography about someone who's only thirty-nine. They were going to write the book whether or not I cooperated. The implied threat is always that the book is going to really trash you if you don't cooperate, and they will use a lot of uninformed sources and have a lot of erroneous information." So, Lucas goes on to explain, he reluctantly went along with the creation of this "unauthorized" biography for accuracy's sake—hardly an endorsement of Pollock's journalistic capabilities.

Skywalking, as it happens, is strongest when depicting the business of Hollywood as business, and Lucas's unique success as an entrepreneur; and weakest in its critical assessments of Lucas's films. Pollock lacks the acumen to take Lucas at his word when he claims the *Star Wars* movies to be little more than well-made, well-meaning trash; and analyzes Lucas's best film, *THX-1138*, in hokey fashion, undiscerning of its many subtleties of plot and verisimilitude. In fact, Pollock seems oblivious to the notion that popular non-fiction should make the difficult accessible to a large audience... and Lucas has one of the largest.

Donald Spoto's biography of Alfred Hitchcock, ***The Dark Side of Genius*** (Little, Brown), is more like it. Spoto approaches his subject with something other than commercial interest, displaying a great devotion to Hitchcock's work and taking great pains to place that work

Luis shows 'em how it's done.

in the context of the man's life films like *Psycho* and *Vertigo*, while adaptations of novels, prove to be highly personal statements by someone incapable of directly and honestly expressing his emotions. The book is so heavy with such analysis—of Hitchcock's sexual repression, his cruelty, his humor, etc.—that one would almost rather read about "That Shower Scene" for the millionth time, or other moviemaking trivia. However, Spoto's focus remains justified, if only a bit narrow. (For instance, while Hitchcock's precursors and influences, like Poe and the surrealists, are discussed, contemporary directors who owe him a fantastic debt, like Brian de Palma, go virtually unmentioned.)

One of Hitchcock's early influences was **Luis Buñuel**, whose memoir, ***My Last Sigh*** (Knopf), had its American publication only a few months after its author's death at eighty-three. With remembrances as lucid and dreamlike as the best of Buñuel's films—*The Exterminating Angel*, *Los Olvidados*, *Viridiana*, and co-directed with Salvador Dali *Un Chien Andalou* and *L'Age d'Or*—this book is what we call a primary source. The birth of surrealism, fascism, blasphemy, an impromptu attempt at murder, condemnation from the Catholic Chruch, a wistful view of the Apocalypse, stories behind films that should be required viewing for all of *HM*'s readers, an enormous amount of beauty and opinion and *life*—it's all here. Along with John Huston's *An Open Book*, the best autobiography by a filmmaker I've ever read.

—Robert Morales

MAGIC REALISM

What is it about **Marion Zimmer Bradley** that makes her so boring? I don't care if ***The Mists of Avalon*** (Knopf) is a bestseller—clearly the people who are buying it are boring, too, or they've never read a Great Mother Goddess book before, and think Bradley's come up with something dazzlingly original. In this overweight saga the Women of Camelot Place scamper about in neat clothes having mystical visions, all talking exactly the same brand of lofty, contraction-less, musty-book English. You can't tell the players without a scorecard; fortunately, there's one provided, as the nasty, misguided Christians—a load of fifth-century Bible Belters—battle for control of King Arthur and his merry men with the enlightened, in-touch, hip priestesses of the Goddess. Bradley's characters have always suffered from Perpetual Adolescence: all is intuition and emotion, with hardly enough brainpower between them to fry an egg. On a sentence-by-sentence level, the writing is unoriginal and turgid—real bestseller material. And sentence by sentence it goes, as people pick up a comb and put it down, cross the room and think about how they feel...

Greyhaven, Bradley's DAW anthology of her friends' work, is not only boring but embarrassing. Pompous, self-congratulatory, and amateurish, Bradley has the blind temerity to equate the writers of her extended family with the likes of the Bloomsbury group. Her editors had the malice to let her. Oh, my darlings, some of us should be afraid of Virginia Woolf.

Alan Dean Foster's new blockbuster, ***Spellsinger*** (Warner), is not pretentious, never boring. Not since Christopher Stasheff's *Warlock* books has there been a fantasy so awesomely cute. A nice college student with a normal boy's lust for girls and "grass" is transported into a magical world peopled largely by evolutionized animals with senseless speech habits. There's a randy otter torn between imitating a Cockney and an extra in *Robin Hood*, a street-talking "black" white rabbit, a giant bat wid a Brooklyn accent, and other exploitative delights. The book rates an R for language: like the weather, everybody talks about it, but nobody ever does anything. They save the world, or are about to, when the book checks out at a hefty 347 pages with the promise of a sequel. Low quality entertainment at its best.

Nobody in ***Tea with the Black Dragon*** (Bantam) saves the world, but **R. A. MacAvoy** saved my sanity. Here's proof that people who write like angels, invent characters who are charming and adult, and have more magic in their little fingers than Certain Authors have in two tons of dead trees, can still get published. A rich blend of Zen, computers, California thrillers, romance, and, of course, dragons . . . don't miss this one; and when MacAvoy's next book, ***Damiano***, comes out this January, don't say I didn't warn you.

"Alan Dean Foster's new blockbuster is not pretentious, never boring."

Joyce Ballou Gregorian has overdone it on her second novel, ***Castledown*** (Ace), whose plot is so top-heavy with detail that much of the freshness that marked its prequel, *The Broken Citadel*, is lost. But this series is still a cut above the bulk of magical world adventures published these days. So is ***King's Blood Four*** (Ace), the opening volume of a promising series whose people are formal players in the Great Game of intrigue and adventure that is designed to separate the Magic Wielders from the Pawns. In tone and terminology it sometimes shows the welcome influence of Gene Wolfe's *Book of the New Sun*; in this first novel, **Sheri A. Tepper**'s sure touches of detail, style, and innovation mark her as an original new talent; she's welcome and well worth watching.

Anthologist **Jessica Amanda Salmonson**'s newest offering in the humanist sword-and-sorcery line, ***Heroic Visions*** (Ace), contains many pleasant and forgettable stories—with the glowing exception of the ever-brilliant **Michael Bishop**'s "The Monkey's Bride." The collection is headed by a new **Fritz Leiber** novella continuing the adventures of his famous duo, Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser—"The Curse of the Smalls and Stars"—which never quite rises above its title. Leiber's prodigious talent is such that you can't always tell the difference between a noble effort gone off the tracks and a mere trippery tossed off to feed the crowd. The story is all device, with the illusion of philosophy pretending to give it substance. Fafhrd and the Mouser deserve better before their final trip across the rainbow bridge.

—Ellen Kushner

REGGAE MESSIAH

It's become a tradition to worship dead rockstars as religious figures—there are probably more shrines to Elvis Presley and John Lennon than any other twentieth century heroes—but when you come down to it, **Bob Marley** went to the mountain and came back again to be revered as the first legit religio-musical idol. Elvis might have been "The King," but when it comes to the legend of Bob Marley (particularly when traveling across Africa), we are talking latter day saint of the Third World. And of course, Marley took great pains to hand-pick those who would spread the word after he left, so Chris Blackwell (his record company president) and Timothy White (his official/unofficial biographer) seem to hold fairly exclusive franchises on this hottest of properties. One must go to them in order to receive. Fortunately, there is no dearth of material here, so Marley fans the world over should rejoice over the release of *Catch A Fire* (the book) and *Confrontation* (the record).

An incredibly detailed account of the life of the Third World's most popular spokesman (Marley spoke for the masses because he refused to be aligned with any particular political or religious group, despite the efforts of Jamaican nationalists, Ras Tafarians, and back-to-Africa believers to each claim him in their turn), ***Catch A Fire*** (Holt, Rinehart, and Winston) demands a lion's share of attention from the reader, but is well worth the effort its dense narrative imposes. Thanks to a ten year backlog of interviews with Marley, his band, and his family,

HM'S PLAYTHING OF THE MONTH

With Christmas just 'round the bend, it was with a bit of luck (and a lot of sexual favors) that *HM* became privy to the new gift sensations of the century (excluding, of course, The Pet Rock and *Marcel Marceau's Greatest Hits*).

Imagine your little alien's face on Christmas morn, when he wakes up to find a **Tokima Digirobo Watch** 'neath the tree. Available in black, silver, and gold, TOW pops off his base, with a clutch of a snap, and unfolds into a mini-robot. The time (with a second hand) and date can be read off his belly. He is available from Forbidden Planet, 821 Broadway, NY, NY 10003 and is a steal for $39.95 (plus $3.00 for postage and handling).

Digirobo? What will they think of next?

Zippy the Pinhead Doll

What's red and yellow, has a goofy smile, and a point on top? Why, a **Zippy the Pinhead** doll, of course! This 24" facsimile of Bill Griffith's classic comic character, is made of 100% pure cotton on the outside and 100% pure polyester in the inside (must be all the Kraft "Food" products and pencil shavings he's been downing).

The "Zipster," as we at *HM* have taken to calling him, is available from Martha-My-Dear, 2617 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley, CA, 94702 for $29.95 (plus $2.50 for postage and handling). Damn! Nothing compared to adoption fees these days! California residents please add 6½% sales tax.

—JSL

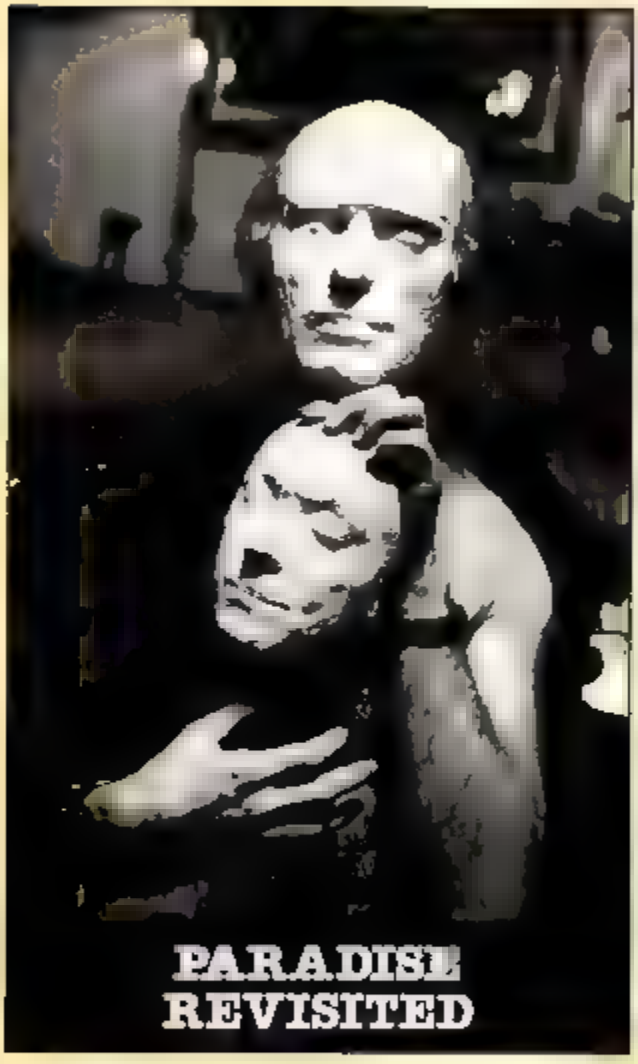
Zippy: It's the Ring Dings that give him that glazed look.

White is able to construct a picture of his subject (which is as much Jamaica as it is the Favorite Son) that's far beyond the personality profile you might expect from a rock biography. What we have here is closer to an anthropological presentation that covers Marley's family lineage from out of Egypt and into Trenchtown, a primer on Ras Tafarianism and sundry African and Jamaican religions and a healthy dose of Jamaican politics. White is interested in Marley as the partial product and peel of a particular environment rather than concentrating on the singer/songwriter perspective (but then, the creative process is one area even the most industrious archivist can't crack); yet he presents us with a multidimensional history from which we can interpolate Marley as we will.

Confrontation is the biography's vinyl companion piece and while a career spanning collection of tracks might have been more apropos, this posthumous LP is a compilation of many recent Marley songs previously unavailable outside of Jamaica. The excellent "Buffalo Soldier" leads the pack, but the entire album is consonant with the Marley tradition of powerful, consistent, and vibrant music. This is no *Midnight Lightning* or *Seasons of Glass*—it's the new Bob Marley and the Wailers album. Or as somebody said, "Jah lives" (at least on vinyl).

—Jon & Sally Tiven

Julian Beck and Judith Malina, from the Bandaged Poets series.
Masks by Carolina. Photo by Ira Cohen



PARADISE REVISITED

In September of 1968, when **The Living Theater** under the direction of **Julian Beck** and **Judith Malina**, returned from their self-imposed European exile, they brought with them four new works which revolutionized the theater and gave expression to a new collective spirit—not only of the participants, but of the time itself. Their earlier successes, *The Connection*, by Jack Gelber, and *The Brig* by Ken Brown, had already begun breaking down barriers between actor and audience—but their newest production, *Paradise Now* blew off the whole roof.

Paradise Now came close to fulfilling Antonin Artaud's dream of letting a lion loose in the theater. This was not theater in the sense that you could just sit and watch: the price of admission was more than your mind. The Living Theater was a traveling commune, a kind of juggernaut of the new consciousness, the not-so-secret agents of a cosmic alternative. The forty-member company turned whole cities upside down just by their presence

"*Paradise Now* came close to fulfilling Antonin Artaud's dream of letting a lion loose in the theater."

They occupied, and they went on.

When I experienced *Paradise* for the first time, I thought, "Wow, a two-ton chainblock, giant eyebeams, a veritable gantry of confirmation!" The audience was on the stage, the actors streaming through the audience in raincloths were rarely if ever, as naked as the spectators turned performers. Someone touched my face and whispered, "Holy cheek." I could hear my murmur of around me, "Holy fool." "Holy sweater." It was like an acid trip and in fact someone had put a tab of acid on my tongue. Talk about disintegrating walls!

Based on the *I Ching* and the *Kabbalah*, *Paradise* was a voyage conceived as a vertical ascent toward Permanent Revolution or Change. And people were changed. Some even learned how to fly. Jim Morrison took off all his clothes at a famous concert. Abbie Hoffman ran a printing press on stage and distributed leaflets. The Black Panthers came to say they had other ideas. Judith Malina was raped during a performance in Brooklyn, and no one even noticed. After the first performance in New Haven, when everyone spilled out into the streets, you could tell the Yale students by their Jockey shorts—I was arrested by simply following Julian and Judith into the police van. And the show went on. And it hasn't stopped. "If I could turn you on, if I could drive you out of your wretched mind, if I could tell you, I would let you know."

Throughout the seventies and beginning of these weighty eighties, the Living Theater has continued the struggle from the streets of Calcutta and Brazil to the ghettos of Pittsburgh and the madhouses of Europe. See it all soon in the definitive film history **Sheldon Rochlin** and **Maxine Harris**'s soon-to-be-released ***Signals through the Flames*** with Julian and Judith themselves explaining what it was and still is all about.

Ira Cohen

HOME VIDEO GAME SYSTEMS ARE OBSOLETE. THE RECENT DRASTIC PRICE DROPS IN RETAIL PRICES FOR THE ATARI 2600, COLECOVISION, AND INTELLIVISION MACHINES ARE A RESULT OF THE HOME COMPUTER'S SUPERIORITY AS A GAME PLAYING DEVICE. IN TEN YEARS AN ATARI 2600 WILL BE LIKE BLACK AND WHITE TELEVISION SETS OR MONO RECORD PLAYERS. HOME COMPUTERS OFFER IMPROVED GRAPHICS, A WIDER SELECTION OF GAMES, AND THE STATUS OF BEING THE LATEST TREND.

RECENTLY I SAMPLED JUST A FEW OF THE HUNDREDS AND HUNDREDS OF HOME COMPUTER GAME CARTRIDGES. I PLAYED ON **ATARI** 400 AND 800 COMPUTERS, A **COMMODORE 64**, AND AN **APPLE 2E**. THERE'S NOT A LOT OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM. ONE IS AS GOOD AS THE NEXT.

PRICES ARE PRETTY REASONABLE. FOR INSTANCE, A COMMODORE 64 SYSTEM (KEYBOARD, PRINTER, DISC DRIVE AND INTERFACE) CAN COST AS LITTLE AS $700.00. IF YOU SHOP CAREFULLY. THE NEW COLECO **ADAM** COMPUTER INCLUDES A MEMORY CONSOLE, KEYBOARD AND LETTER QUALITY PRINTER FOR ONLY $529.00 WHOLESALE. THIS IS ONLY A FEW HUNDRED MORE THAN HOME GAME SYSTEMS COST A FEW YEARS AGO.

THERE ARE SOME GREAT GAMES. ATARI'S **DONKEY KONG** CARTRIDGE IS BETTER THAN THE COLECOVISION VERSION. IT'S ALMOST COMPARABLE TO THE ARCADE VERSION—IT EVEN FEATURES THE OPENING SCENE, INTERMISSIONS, AND ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK.

VIRTUALLY EVERY ARCADE GAME EVER MADE IS AVAILABLE TO THE MOST POPULAR HOME COMPUTERS. THE **FROGGER** CARTRIDGE, BY SIERRA ON-LINE FOR THE COMMODORE 64 IS AS GOOD, IF NOT BETTER, THAN THE ARCADE GAME. **APPLE PANIC**, BY CREATIVE SOFTWARE FOR THE VIC 20, IS A VERSION OF **SPACE PANIC** THAT IS ALMOST AS GOOD AS THE ORIGINAL (ONE OF MY FAVORITES OF ALL TIME).

THE FUN GOES BEYOND YOUR TYPICAL ARCADE/AMUSEMENT GAMES. **ABUSE** BY DON'T ASK SOFTWARE FOR THE ATARI 400/800 COMPUTERS, IS A PROGRAM THAT **INSULTS** YOU BY MAKING SARCASTIC REMARKS ABOUT YOUR FAMILY BACKGROUND AND PHYSICAL OR MENTAL MAKEUP. IF YOU CAN'T TYPE AN INSULT IN FAST ENOUGH TO ANSWER, IT MAKES FUN OF YOU AND CALLS YOU A **MORON**.

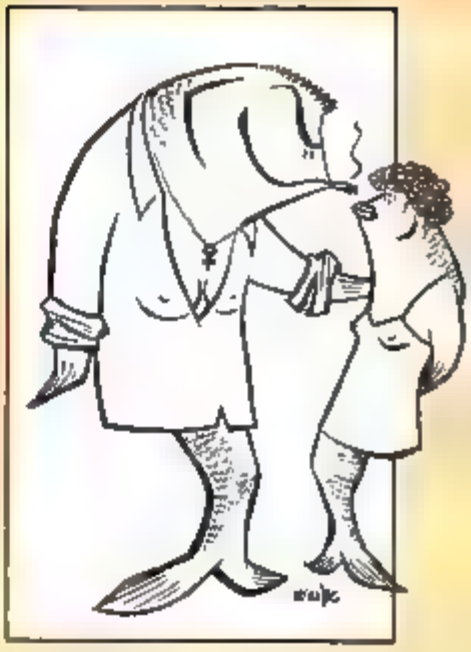
THERE ARE ALSO FANTASY GAMES, ADVENTURE GAMES, ART GAMES, MUSIC GAMES, PUZZLE GAMES, SEX GAMES, MONEY GAMES, SPORTS GAMES, AND DETECTIVE MYSTERY GAMES. THE VARIETY OF THEMES IS MUCH WIDER THAN WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN ARCADES.

IF YOU'RE GOING TO INVEST IN GAME EQUIPMENT, BUY A COMPUTER. WHO KNOWS? THERE MIGHT EVEN BE **OTHER** USES FOR IT.

—JOHN HOLMSTROM

CRYPTICA CRYPTICA CRYPTICA CRYPTICA CRYPTICA

Eweks, He Talks • The Joint Chiefs of Staff have been watching *Star Wars* again. No sooner had the Air Force successfully tested its first missile-destroying airborne laser than the Army started work on its six-legged walking tank. Called an "adaptative suspension vehicle," the manned sf fantasy war machine should be taking its first steps by the middle of next year. A small-scale unmanned model has already scampered gleefully around the grounds of Ohio State University where the monster is being built under government contract. The idea is that half the Earth's surface is impassable to normal wheeled or tracked transport. Legged vehicles, like animals, can climb steep slippery slopes, penetrate thick undergrowth and traverse boulder or ditch country. The powerful armor-plated legs will be designed to walk automatically, leaving the driver to worry only about steering the thing. New electronics, sensors and 'ase scan radar will map out the terrain ahead, instructing the legs where to plant themselves next. Rumor has it the Russians are training a new breed of little furry forest creatures to deal with the problem.



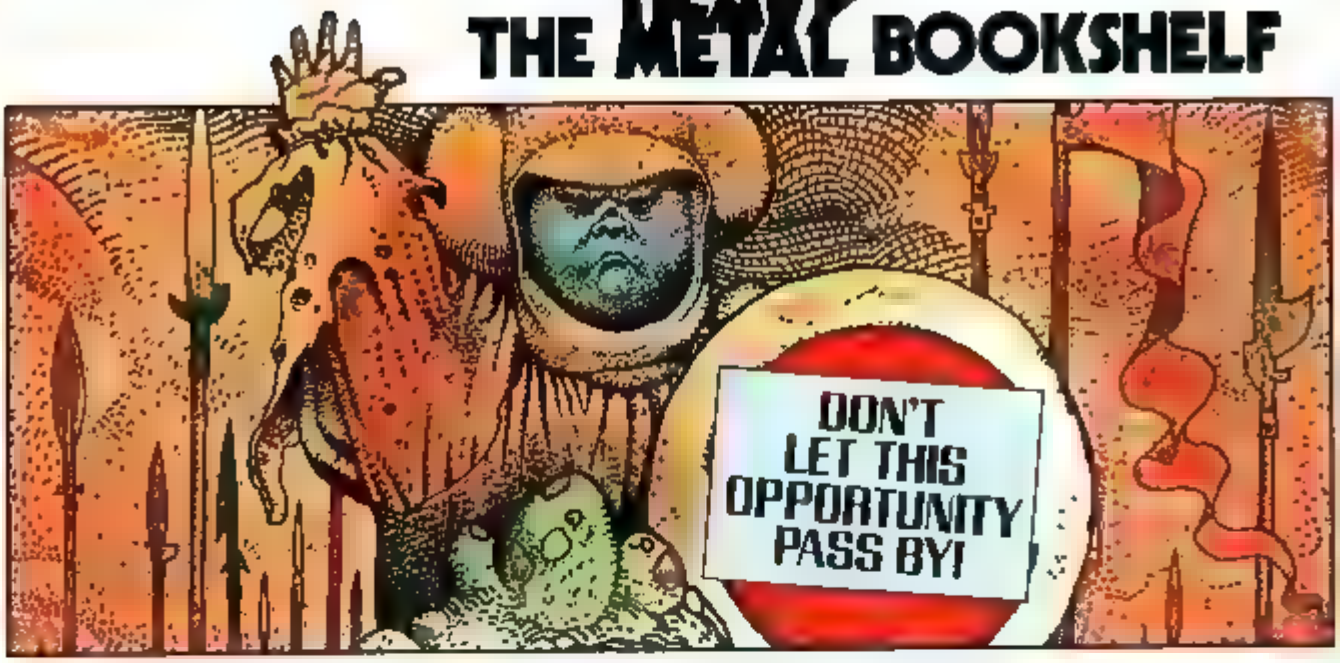
Something Fishy This Way Comes • Keeping that last item in mind, imagine how sick the saddle back wrasse must be. This species of coral fish is so sex-obsessed that females are willing to change their gender if that's what it takes to get laid. Should a situation arise where the males seem to have drifted off, the largest females in the harem stop producing eggs, start producing sperm, and set about chasing tail. Milton Diamond of the University of Hawaii put it bluntly: "If you stick two of these fish together, the bigger one will become the male." More dangerous data in lesbian hands.

Lovesick • Can we talk? Voyeur researchers ogling the sexual habits of horny DNA molecules, have finally explained the mystery of sex. It's a deviant contagious disease. In the DNA societal microcosm, the Moral Majority is represented by citizen-bacteria who replicate themselves asexually—sort of like jerking off to reproduce. They're the work-oriented, law-abiding midwesterners who provide stability and order. Surrounding them are parasitic DNA whose life's work is to rape and fertilize the others. These guys are hyper-sexed viruses with a monomania for what's known as "duplicative transposition." Fornication, in other words. Science's verdict is that parasitic DNA invented sexual reproduction—originally a disease that plants and animals have now learned to live with. Since DNA is the very basis of life, this is pretty heavy ammunition for the Moral Majority—not to mention lesbian separatists. • But what does this revelation mean to women suffering from "senile vagina"? Coined by doctors at Rutgers Medical School, the term refers to a "disorder" that commonly plagues postmenopausal women who have allowed their vaginas to fall into disuse. Also known as vaginal atrophy, the symptoms include loss of tissue elasticity and fewer mucous membranes. Up to now, that's been the malady, and more sex the cure. Enter the genetic revolution, and suddenly these women may be the few healthy souls who can claim to have conquered the world's oldest disease.

Snoring Away • The Swiss are moving on from the Cuckoo to invent yet another sleep-disturbing gadget, this time under the guise of an anti-snoring device. A microphone by the victim's bed is tuned to the low-frequency sound of snoring. When it detects a sound which hits the right pitch, ie snoring, it sends out an ultrasonic signal to a watch like receiver worn on the sleeper's wrist. A shock is delivered into the unsuspecting snorer's arm, supposedly enough to shut him up without waking him. Meant me, any animals within hearing distance are likely to set up a barrage of howling and barking sufficient to wake the dead.

—Melik Kaylan

THE HEAVY METAL BOOKSHELF



ULYSSES
Cover price— $6.95
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Cover price— $2.95
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Please send me the *Heavy Metal* books as indicated below. I have enclosed a check or money order payable to *Heavy Metal* books. I have included 75¢ for postage and handling of each book.

Ulysses_____copies at $3.50 each
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Total amount enclosed $_____

Name _____

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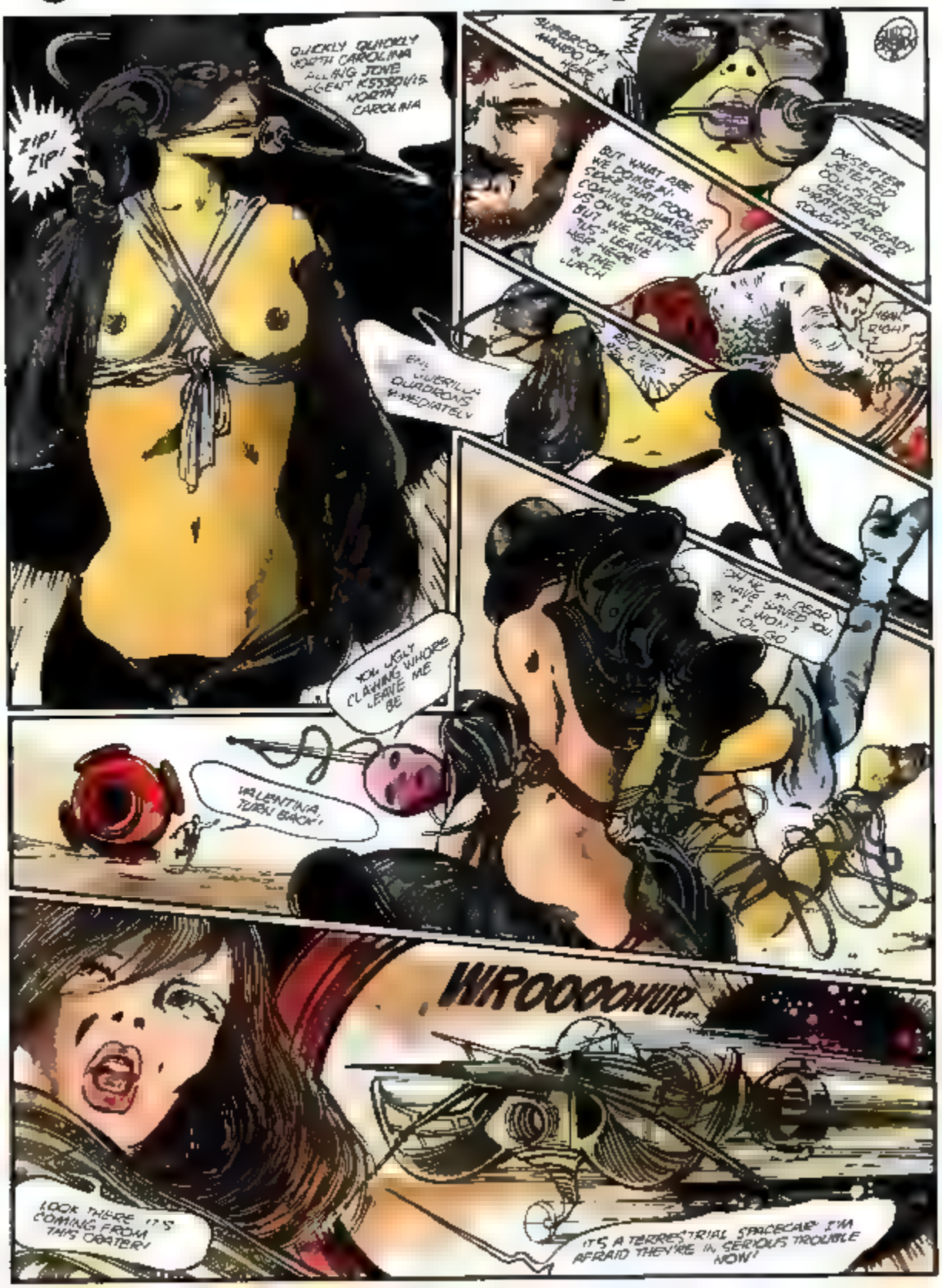
(New York State residents, please add applicable sales tax.)

VALENTINA THE PIRATE


ZIP! ZIP!
QUICKLY QUICKLY SOUTH CAROLINA ALANG JONES AGENT KISSROVIS SOUTH CAROLINA
SUPERCOM MANDO 1-2 HERE
DESERTER VETERAN COLLISION CENTAURI PIRATES ALREADY FOUGHT AFTER
BUT WHAT ARE WE DOING AT SEDGE THAT POOL IS COMING TOWARDS US ON HORSEBACK BUT WE CAN'T LEAVE HER HERE IN THE MARCH
AGAIN RIGHT
EH! VALERIA! GUARDIANS IMMEDIATELY
OH NO, MY DEAR I HAVE SAVED YOU BUT I WON'T YOU GO
YOU, UGLY CLASHING WHORE LEAVE ME
VALENTINA, TURN BACK!
WROOOOHUR...
LOOK THERE IT'S COMING FROM THIS CRATER!
IT'S A TERRESTRIAL SPACECAR I'M AFRAID THEY'RE IN SERIOUS TROUBLE NOW!

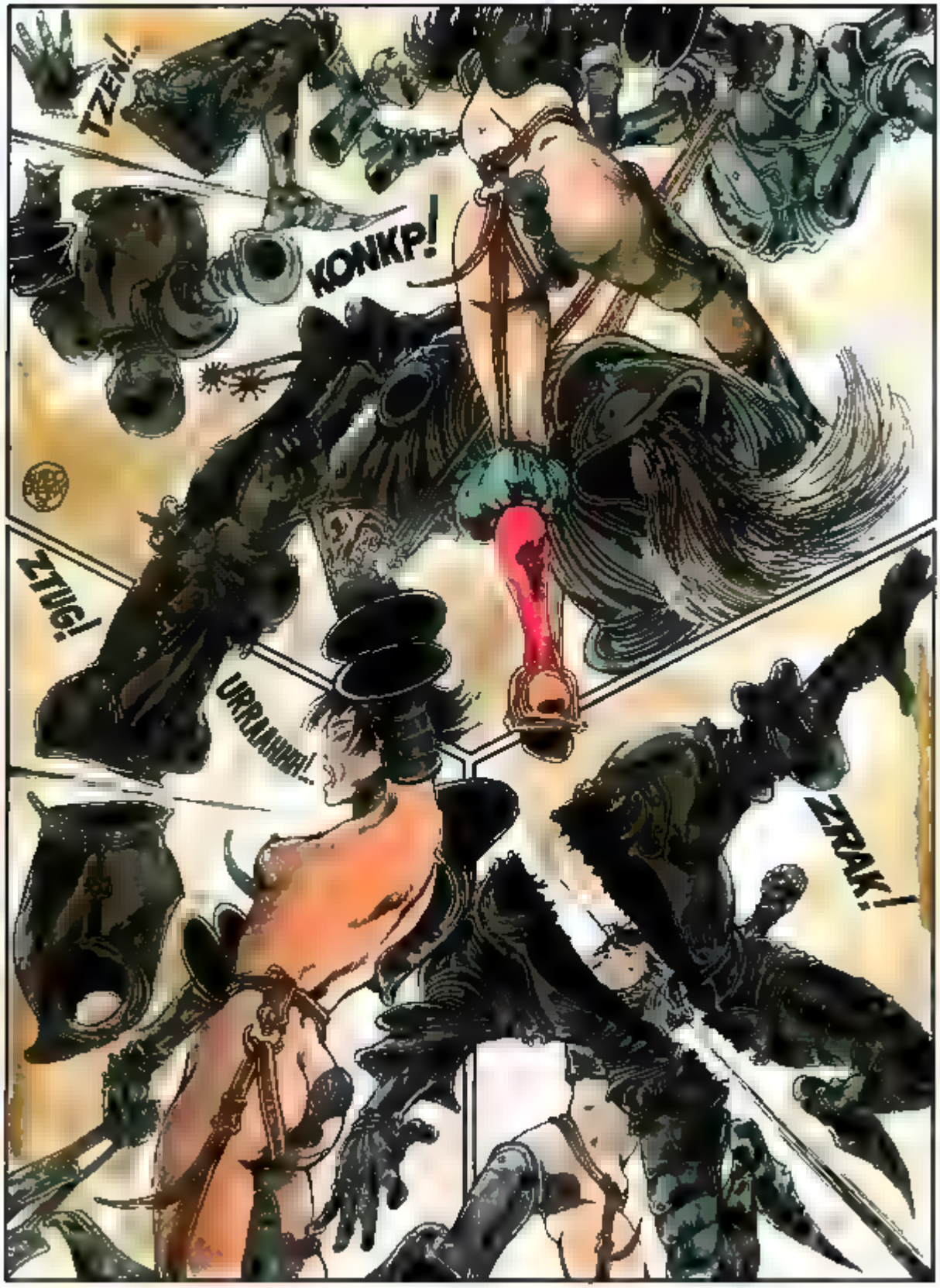
YOU HAVE DECA, SO NICE TO ME THAT I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO GET TO KNOW YOUR BEAUTIFUL LITTLE SISTER
TUUN!
HERE COMES THE FEARLESS RIDING SCHOOL OF ARMED
KSHT! KSHT! KSHT! KSHT! KSHT!
SMACK!
I'M GETTING OUT
MEANWHILE TAKE THIS ARCHIMETER THAT VALENTINA'S PREGNANT AGENT LOST
TOO LATE! THE GIONESIAN POLICE ARE UPON US

KSHT! KSHT! KSHT! KSHT!
STOP, VALENTINA! ARE YOU MAD? THEY ARE INVULNERABLE!
GO AWAY, GO AWAY! DRAKE ARMSTRONG! STAND BACK! THERE IS A SECRET IN THE GUBASS OF AN HORSE!
ZTENG!..
ZTENG!
ZTENG!..
FORWARD! FORWARD, POTEMKIN! THEY WILL NOT GET BY!!
AAAAHHH!

AHA! THE CRUISER POTEMKIN DEMOLISHES THE INTERPLANETARY BATTLESHIPS!
VALENTINA! WAIT!
SHE HAS NO CHANCE WHATSOEVER!
BUT LOOK HOW THE LANCES BOUNCE OFF HER ARMOR SHE'LL BE JUST FINE
WE'VE MADE A DREADFUL MISTAKE THAT IDIOT SOUTH CAROLINA WASN'T SUC-CEEDED IN DRIVING AWAY VALENTINA! NOW WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO TELL HEAD-QUARTERS?
KSHT!
...BEAR THE BRUNT, DEAR HALF SISTER! THEY'LL SKIN YOU ALIVE
KSHT!.. KSHT!..
...KSHT!

I KNOW WHAT I CAN DO. THE SPACECRAFT HAS REMAINED UNGUARDED UNTIL I BE ABLE TO DRIVE IT
THEY HAVE ABANDONED ME HERE "TO KEEP WATCH. THEY SAID AN UNARMED GUARD ABOUT ALL I COULD GUARD AGAINST IS A BAND OF MICE
WHAT A FILTHY WORLD THIS IS. BUT THAT GIRL REALLY KNOWS WHAT SHE'S DOING. AND ME WHO BELIEVED HER TO BE A CRACKPOT
YEAHH...
GREAT! HE GOT IT TO WORK!
"HERE WE GO
YOU HATEFUL GERMAN! HANDS UP AND GET THE BALL OF STEEL OFF THE GROUND!

UNNH ! SURE WAS SO... DON'T KNOW HOW TO DRIVE THIS CONTRAPTION
SLAMMM!
OOOOOF !
AH NO!
GIVE ME A HAND HERE IT AIN'T OLD AGE WE'RE
THERE YOU ARE YOU'RE SO MINE
YOU HAVE BEEN PLAYING WITH ME BITCH ! I HAVE A RIGHT TO BE VIOLENT ! I COULD EASILY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOU!
I AM A VICTIM OF MOR AL LAW!
I CAN'T LET YOU RUIN PEOPLES LIVES LIKE THIS YOUR FACE WHY ALWAYS COVER IT? NEVER MIND WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME


TZEN!..
KONKP!
ZTUG!
URRAHHH!..
ZRAK!

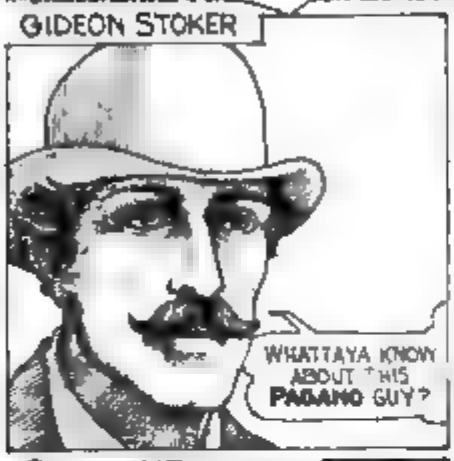
URRAH!!
TZAK!
TZAK!
TZAK!
SLOWLY NOW, POTEMKIN! THERE WE'VE DONE IT!
DAMN, VALENTINA! YOU'VE MASSACRED THEM! I DIDN'T THINK YOU WERE CAPABLE OF SUCH STRENGTH!
OF SUCH CRUELTY IS WHAT YOU REALLY MEAN, RIGHT? BUT I HAVEN'T KILLED ANYONE! DO YOU SEE WHAT IS INSIDE THESE CUIRASSES? NOTHING! THEY ARE EMPTY! DIDN'T YOU KNOW THAT ON EARTH THEY DON'T USE HUMAN SOLDIERS ANYMORE. THEY USE ROBOTS!
MATTIA WAKE UP! IT'S ALMOST 9:30! GET UP QUICKLY AND GET READY FOR SCHOOL.
BUT MAMA I'M NOT FINISHED DREAMING YET! YOU WERE THERE IT WAS NEAT
REALLY? WELL TELL ME ABOUT IT WHILE YOU DRESS. THEN MAYBE TONIGHT I WILL DREAM, TOO.

TO BE CONTINUED

TEX☆ARCANA

MEETS THE TOAST OF EUROPE · PART 3

THE RULES SAY THAT WHENEVER A STORY REACHES A CERTAIN LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY, I AM REQUIRED TO PROVIDE A REVIEW. SO HERE IS THE POSTER THAT HAS APPEARED ALL OVER HANGMAN'S CORNERS AND SOME OF THE FOLKS LIKELY TO BE EFFECTED BY IT



©1982 John Findley

AND, OF COURSE

THE FIRST DAY I GOT IT.
FOSTERS

YEAH, BUT I WOULDN' GO OUT THERE THIS AFTERNOON LOOK AT THAT STORM A BUILDIN'
'TERNOON, BOYS. COFFEE ER WHAT?

SHERIFF, DOC MEET MR STOKER, TH NEW NEWSPAPER FELLER.
HE WANTS T ASK YA SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT THAT PAGANO GUY FIGGERS THERE'S A STORY IN IT
MISTER I GOT IT UP T' HERE WITH THAT PAGANO GUY AN' THE PORE BASTARD AIN'T EVEN HIT TOWN YET.
THIS HERE S YER REAL STORY, THESE LI'L LOST VARMINTS.
WEIRD LITTLE VARMINT #1
$50 REWARD POSTED
COLOR - WHITE
ABOUT 2½ FT. TALL.
WANTED
FER HIS OWN PERTECTION
WEIRD LITTLE VARMINT #2
$37 REWARD POSTED
COLOR - GREENISH (SORTA)
ABOUT 3 FT TALL
+ TAIL.
WANTED
FER HIS OWN PERTECTION
THEY'S OUT THERE SOMEWHERES... FENDIN' FER THEIRSELVES.

LIZARD

WE'RE JUST GONNA HAVE T' SEND TH' KORIS
SWEA

..AND YOU'VE MADE UP TWO ROOMS FOR TONIGHT'S NEW ARRIVALS?
GOOD, I DON'T EXPECT THEY'LL BE STAYING ALL FOUR NIGHTS
THEY'RE ALL CLOSED
HEAD UP, LOOK EVERYONE
PEOPLE. LET THE WORLD KNOW IT
FINISH UP SO YOU CAN BE

YES?
PAGANO
COME IN MR PAGANO, I WAS EXPECTING YOU MUCH LATER
IT WAS NECESSARY TO HURRY, BECAUSE OF THE STORM
I THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE TWO OF YOU..
MY SERVANT WILL BE ALONG
YOU MUST BE EXHAUSTED I'LL SHOW YOU DIRECTLY TO YOUR ROOMS. WE CAN DISCUSS THE HOUSE RULES TOMORROW...
ESPECIALLY THOSE GOVERNING
THE WINDOWS, THEY ARE CLOSED, SEÑORA
PALOMA SAID YOU THOUGHT PREPARED THIS ROOM
I DID SEÑORA
WELL THE BED IS MADE WILL YOU SEE TO THE REST BEFORE YOU LEAVE?

MADRE DE DIOS!
SLAM!
NO!
PLEASE!
AND WHAT ABOUT

Photograph by Farshid Sharucha

Gaetano Liberatore

Around the World in Eighty Minutes

by Rosalie Gomes

GAETANO LIBERATORE THE GREATEST TALENT TO COME OUT OF EUROPE SINCE THE "MOEBIUS STRIP"

Gaetano (Tanino) Liberatore couldn't resemble his characters less. The first impression he gives is one of genuine warmth and openness. Violence seems as foreign to him as kindness to the characters in Ranxerox. *But appearances are often deceiving.*

During the first part of this interview, Liberatore ran The Godfather *on his video set, treating me to frame-by-frame freezes of the gorier scenes of his favorite film.*

Liberatore was born in Quadri (population 900), Italy, thirty years ago. For the past year he has been living and working in Paris, where he has rapidly become one of the local star artists. Ranxerox, *which is written by Stefano Tamburini, is being simultaneously published in French comics magazine* L'Echo des Savanes *and the Italian magazine* Frigidaire. *The hulking robot was introduced to American readers in the July 1983 issue of* Heavy Metal.

I interviewed Liberatore on two separate occasions. Once, immediately before his departure for New York, where he was Heavy Metal's *guest at a summer comics convention, and again on his return to Paris, fresh with his impressions of the Big Apple.*

—R.G.

Before New York

HM: Where and when was Ranxerox born?

GL: The first Ranxerox story was written and drawn, in black and white, by Stefano Tamburini in 1978. He created the main characters, Ranxerox and Lubna.

HM: When did you first draw Ranxerox?

GL: In November 1980 in the first issue of *Frigidaire*. It was also the first time *Ranxerox* appeared in color.

HM: Have you ever wanted to write the scenario yourself?

GL: Not particularly for *Ranxerox*. He's really Stefano's creation. I don't even like him all that much!

HM: But don't you feel he's also become your character now? Hasn't he changed and evolved since Stefano first drew him?

GL: Yes. I've given Ranxerox more muscles and changed his nose a bit—I've tried to make it look more realistically sliced-off. Since then, he's kept on acquiring more muscles—he's been taking vitamins!

HM: Did you make Lubna younger?

GL: No. She was always very young.

HM: So she's not part of your own fantasy world?

GL: No. I have no fantasies.

HM: How do you work now that you're in Paris and Tamburini is in Italy?

GL: We use the mail a lot. First he sends me a synopsis with a panel-by-panel breakdown, but which leaves me free to lay out each panel as I like. When he gets my penciled pages, he letters in the text, mails them back to me, and then I render them.

HM: Did you ever run into any problems with a well-known company that makes photocopying equipment?

GL: When Stefano was doing it, the character was called Rank Xerox [Europe's Xerox Corporation]. Then we got a letter from the company lawyer saying we couldn't use their name, that the story was violent and obscene and therefore bad for their image. So we made it into one word, and never heard from them again.

HM: How did you first get into comics? Was it a childhood dream?

GL: No. I've always drawn, but I didn't think of comics as something I could do professionally. My father always tried to stop me from drawing—he said there wasn't any money in it—but I carried on behind his back. I started when I was five years old. One day, when I was sick, I started drawing in the morning and kept going until I'd filled a 500-page notebook by the evening. I remember that incident very vividly. I looked for those drawings recently, but they seem to have disappeared.

HM: What did you draw then?

GL: Even as a kid, I was fascinated by sex. I drew stars from movie magazines, but I took their clothes off and gave them very prominent breasts. I must have been between eight and ten then.

HM: Did you ever go to art school?

GL: Yes. Finally, when I was thirteen, after a long battle with my father, he agreed to let me go to art school in Pescara, which is near Quadri. That was the first time I'd gone anywhere outside my own village, and it was quite a shock. Pescara is a small town, but, to

me, it seemed like a very big city. I've always been shy, but I was *really* shy then. But I finally managed to assert myself at school.

HM: In what way? Did you get into fights with the other kids and beat them up?

GL: No. I was always on the sidelines. When the other kids saw I could draw fast and well, they all started asking me to do their homework for them. In the time it took them to do half a drawing, I could do four or five. So I did everyone's drawings for them and became very popular.

HM: Did you draw comics then?

GL: No, that was my Michelangelo period. I just drew hands, feet, and muscles for a very long time. Michelangelo used to exaggerate his proportions—no real person has muscles like he drew. Today, that helps me to put veins like drain pipes into Ranxerox's arms without making them look unreal. What I learned about anatomy also helps me now to draw without using photographs.

When I finished art school, my father sent me to Rome to study architecture. For two years, I was a model student. I only did architectural drawings. But then, one day, my sister gave me a set of paints and brushes, and that was the end of my architectural career.

HM: How did you become a professional artist?

GL: Completely by chance, like everything else in my life. I've never really had to go after anything I've achieved. In 1975, I started doing record jackets for RCA—mainly Italian rock groups, and a couple of Frank Zappa albums. The wife of a guy I knew worked for RCA. She happened to see my work and liked it, so she asked me to do a record jacket.

I also got into comics purely by chance. An old friend from Pescara was working for a semi-underground comics magazine, and he asked me to do a story. I liked comics and had drawers full of unfinished stories. But the language of comics didn't come naturally to me at first. I saw myself essentially as an illustrator. I still prefer illustration because it doesn't repeat itself—it ends on the page. Anyway, I ended up doing covers for them, and they published my first comics story. That was five years ago. I'm not very proud of the work I did then. The magazine was called *Cannibale*, after Picabia's satirical magazine. *Frigidaire* was born out of *Cannibale*.

HM: Did you read comics as a kid?

GL: I read *only* comics.

HM: What other artists besides Michelangelo influenced you?

GL: Everyone. I mean it. All the Great Masters, and Moebius, Hugo Pratt, Gil Kane when he drew *Green Lantern*, Corben, but not all of Corben. What I really like about Corben is the realism he puts into his work. For example, he varies the lighting so that when a character moves, the light shifts. Even when he draws a cartoon-like character with a big nose, he lights him so realistically that he doesn't look out of place in a realistic setting. I also like Will Eisner, but I discovered him rather late.

HM: What about your own technique? I've always been struck by the contrast between the harshness of the images you draw and the softness of your colors and forms.

GL: I rely on chance, once again! I'm always experimenting with new techniques. In comics, you have to work fast. I don't like gouache or dyes because they take too long to dry. I prefer markers because they're fast and modern, like comics. I use wide-tipped Pantone markers for the flat tones. For the modeling, I've tried various things: pencil, theater make-up... I now use a brand of marker that takes a few seconds to dry. I apply it over the Pantone wash and then smudge it with my finger to get the effect I want. I've got to work really fast.

HM: You've become something of a star in France. Do you think you're better known here in France than in Italy?

GL: I don't think so. But success came to me more quickly in France. I became known in both countries at about the same time, thanks to *Ranxerox*, which was published almost simultaneously in both countries. But Italian and French readers don't look at comics in the same way. In France comics artists are stars. In Italy they aren't. Most Italian readers think comics are to be read and then thrown in the garbage.

HM: A disposable form?

GL: That's right.

HM: Some of the violence in your work seems gratuitous. There's a scene in one of the early episodes where Ranxerox crushes the hand of a little flower girl.

GL: No, no, it's not gratuitous at all. When you go to a restaurant in Rome, people keep coming up to you to sell flowers, play music at you, or just ask for money. It doesn't stop. So, when Ranxerox crushes the girl's hand, he's only doing what deep down every Italian would love to do. That incident was Stefano's idea, but I got a big kick out of drawing it!

HM: Do you get a lot of flak from editors and readers because of the violence?

GL: Only from the editors. They always find the violence too much. The readers just want to know who Ranxerox is going to bump off next. Anyway, the violence in *Ranxerox* is so exaggerated, it's not really violence anymore. It's not real violence like the violence in *Mad Max*. In Italy, people find *Ranxerox* funny because it's so exaggerated—it's like a pie being thrown in someone's face. Or like a spaghetti [illegible]

HM: Is this a typically Italian form of humor?

GL: Perhaps. In Italy, even when there's a serious accident, there's always someone in the crowd who'll crack a joke.

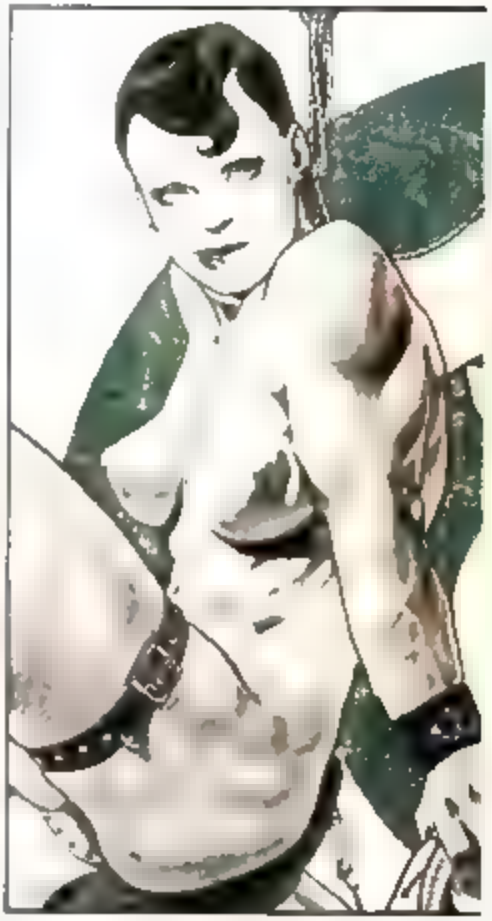
HM: What about politics? Are there any political intentions in *Ranxerox*?

GL: No, not in *Ranxerox*. There's no way it could be regarded as political. The editor of *Frigidaire* does have leftist leanings, but the magazine doesn't propound any political ideology. Though it's obviously not right-wing.

HM: You've said that Ranxerox is not your favorite character. Why is that?

GL: I never feel I've obtained what I was after. It's overworked. I think it's because of the repetition involved in drawing the same characters over and over again. As I've said before, I really prefer illustration.

HM: Is repetition, then, a problem that is inherent to comics?



"American women made me realize that I am a real provincial hick."

"In some ways Americans are very free, and in others, they are very rigid."

GL: I don't know if it's the same with other artists, but for me that's the way it is. I'd like to do comics in black and white, to see if I would still react in the same way. I think working in black and white would be easier, less heavy and faster too, so less repetitive.

HM: *Ranxerox*, the movie, is being prepared. Will you work on it?

GL: I hope so, so I can make lots of money!

HM: What is your greatest ambition?

GL: To become President of the United States so I can move the White House, brick by brick, to Quadri.

After New York . . .

HM: You've just been to the States for the first time, yet you've been drawing a futuristic New York in *Ranxerox* for several years. How did the real New York compare to the way you'd imagined it?

GL: It was just as I'd imagined it, except more so . . . everything was more exaggerated than I had expected it to be. It was dirtier and hotter and more aggressive, but I loved it. I think New York's fantastic. The cabs are wonderfully filthy. You go in wearing a white suit, and when you get out, it's black. The heat is also unbelievable. It's worse than Rome, and I thought that was bad. It's a good thing they have air conditioning. During the first couple of days of the convention I only left the hotel to buy cigarettes.

HM: Do you have a lot of fans in the States? Did you meet them at the convention?

GL: Yes, I met some guys at the convention who knew *Ranxerox* from before its publication in *Heavy Metal*. They'd picked up a copy of the French album, *Ranxerox in New York*. They took me to a fantastic Rasta bar. They were very "simpatico," very friendly, and I had a great time hanging out with them.

HM: What do you think of the censorship of some of the panels of *Ranxerox* for the American audience? Actually, have you seen the September issue of *Heavy Metal*?

GL: No. [I hand him the issue, and he flicks through it till his eye falls on the panels on page nineteen, where a bedsheet has been strategically added to cover Ranxerox's very prominent erection. Liberatore lets out a loud guffaw.] They told me they were going to put a black band across it, but this is great. They said if they didn't censor these panels, the magazine would be banned in at least five states. This is really funny: [he points to a panel on the opposite page where Ranxerox is lying in bed, with his limp genitals in full view] they only censor the panels where he's got a hard on! In any case, it doesn't matter: it doesn't really make any difference to the story. But that's one of the weird things about Americans . . . I can't figure them out. In someways they are very free, and in others they are very rigid.

HM: In what other ways did Americans puzzle you?

GL: The way people think and reason in New York came as a real shock to me—at least at first. For Americans, both men and women, the most important thing in life is to succeed in their work. Everything else takes second place. For me that's [he shrugs, looks up at the ceiling] . . . strange. It doesn't even seem to matter what the job is, everyone thinks *their* job is the most important thing. And to succeed, people seem ready to give up anything that comes in the way.

HM: What effect does this grinding work ethic have on male-female relationships?

GL: The result is that people aren't as passionate—they're not like the Italians. [laughs loudly] Seriously, though, what New York made me realize is that compared to Americans I'm much less free. Americans don't seem to give a damn about most things. And that's good. What bugs me is that I'm not like that. Being in New York made me realize that I'm very, very Italian. And American women made me realize that I'm a real provincial hick.

HM: Let's get back to your work. Did any new projects and contacts come out of your trip to the States?

GL: Yes, lots of great contacts, lots of friendly people. While I was there I did a Conan cover for Marvel, and I'm now working on a story by Bruce Jones. When I came back from New York, I went to Italy and I've started working on a new female character with Stefano Tamburini. It all began because I did some sketches for a projected cover for *Frigidaire* which I ended up not doing. Stefano saw the sketches and liked them and he said, "Hey, that's good for a new character." So I said, "OK, I'll do it, but you have to write scenarios for me with things that I like to draw." So we decided that I would draw a portfolio of this new character first, and then Stefano would write the story around it. It takes place in a desert environment. The only link between the towns in the desert is by big heavy trucks. There are pirates in the desert. The main character is a very strong, muscular woman who does a lot of body building. She's an expert in all the martial arts and a great shot and she knows all about firearms. But all this still has to be developed.

HM: Have you thought about any of the other characters?

GL: Not all of them, but I know who all the main characters are. The portfolio will have eight plates, and only two or three will be of the heroine. The others will show the other characters—the pirates, the eunuch who is her bodyguard—and the desert environment, the trucks and so on.

HM: Is all this very futuristic?

GL: Yes. It's like *Ranxerox*, only instead of being in the city it's in the desert.

HM: Is the heroine a sort of female Ranxerox?

GL: No, no, she's a sort of legionnaire.

HM: So basically she fights in the desert all the time?

GL: Yes, she fights, but she also makes love and does lots of other things.

HM: Will this new story be published simultaneously with *Ranxerox*?

GL: No. When we finish the third *Ranxerox* album, we'll stop doing him for a while to do the new story, and if it's successful, we'll do an album or two. But we'll come back to *Ranxerox* later. I just don't have time to do both—unless I can find an artist to help me, someone who could do the inking for me. Then I could do both.

HM: Will the new story be in color?

GL: No, it will be in black and white with grays, like the bordello postcards.

HM: Do you have any other projects in the works?

GL: I'm getting married at Christmas!

HM: From what you said earlier, we can safely assume the future bride is Italian.

GL: Yes, she is. But to get back to work projects . . . I'm still hoping that someday I'll win a lottery and be able to retire from comics. If that happened, I'd only do illustrations. I'd like to carry on doing record album jackets. And I'd also like to do illustrated books. I'd love to illustrate the novels of Garcia Márquez. The idea of doing book illustrations is something new.

HM: How did this idea occur to you? Did someone ask you to illustrate a book?

GL: Yes. Jodorowsky asked me to illustrate one of his novels. He told me I could do ten or 200 illustrations, whatever I wanted. But I still haven't done anything about that. I really haven't behaved very well, but I can't get into it. His style is too surrealistic for me. I'm more comfortable with a more realistic style, which is why I like Garcia Márquez. He combines fantasy with realism.

HM: Have you done any illustrations recently?

GL: Yes, though not for books. I did a poster in Italy for a conference on industrial waste that will be held in Perugia. I drew a girl and a part-human, part-simian monster. The girl has a beautiful face and the body of a mutant. She has no skin on her arms, so you can see all the flesh and muscles. It's not a very happy message. It's supposed to make people think, "*Madonna*, this is what could happen!" It's a pretty bleak, threatening image of the future. Well, it's threatening for others, not for me. I'd like a world full of mutants . . . like Corben's. [laughs] But only if I weren't one myself!

HM: On the subject of accidents of birth . . . you once told me you had just missed being an American. Can you tell us that story?

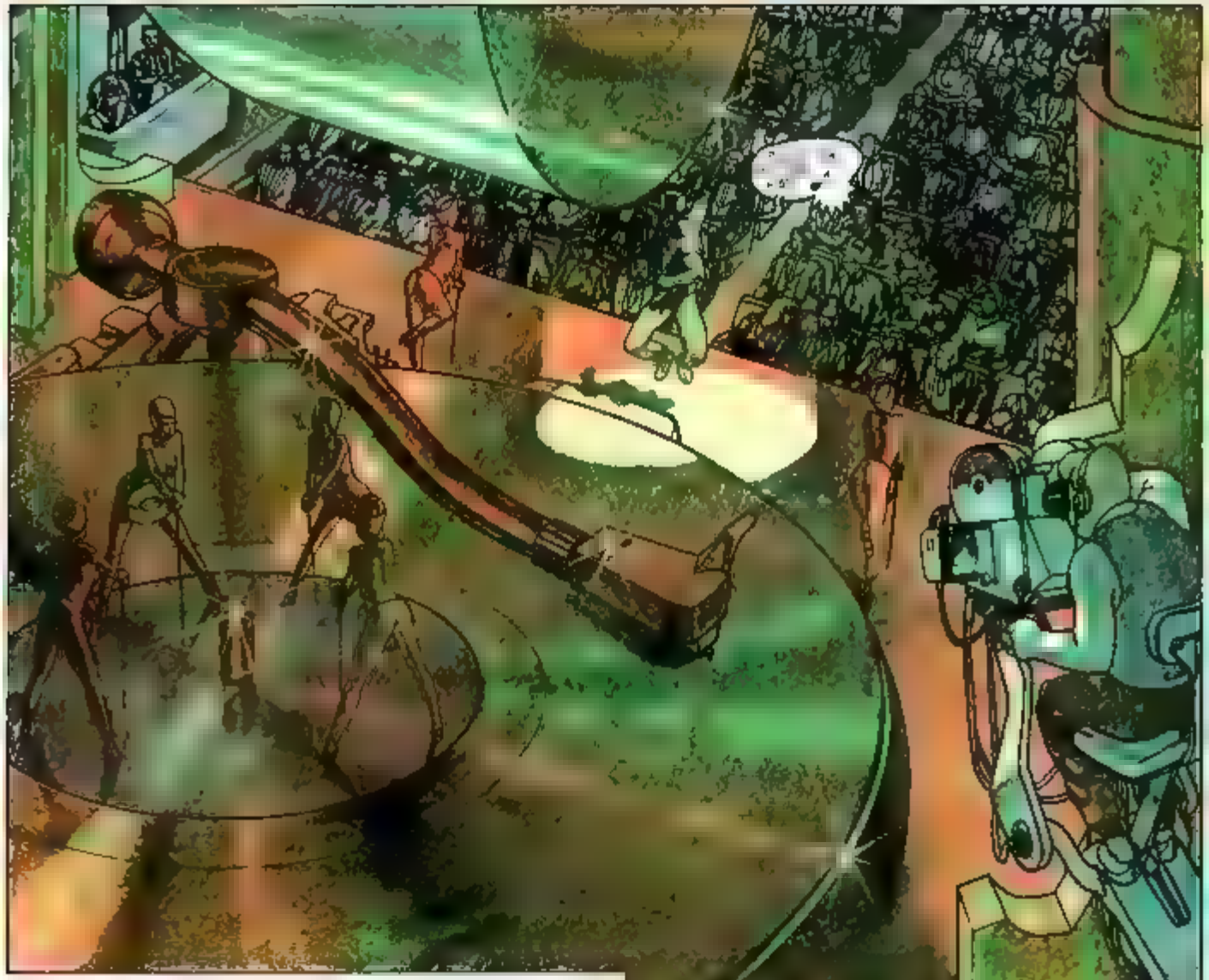
GL: Well, all my father's family emigrated to America. My grandfather went over many years ago, and then my grandmother and the kids followed. They all stayed in Philadelphia, except for my father, who only stayed for four months. He was already married then and had two daughters—my two older sisters. He was also the only one who had a job in Italy, so he got back on the boat and went back to Quadri. When I was in the States, I went to Philadelphia and met the families of my father's two brothers. We stayed up all night drinking lots of wine and talking about America and Italy. I had a great time with them. My aunt, who was born in the States and has never been to Italy, speaks perfect Italian, even the dialect, and she talks about Italy as if she knew it. I have seven cousins. One of them is only fifteen but he's already two meters tall. I feel really small next to him.

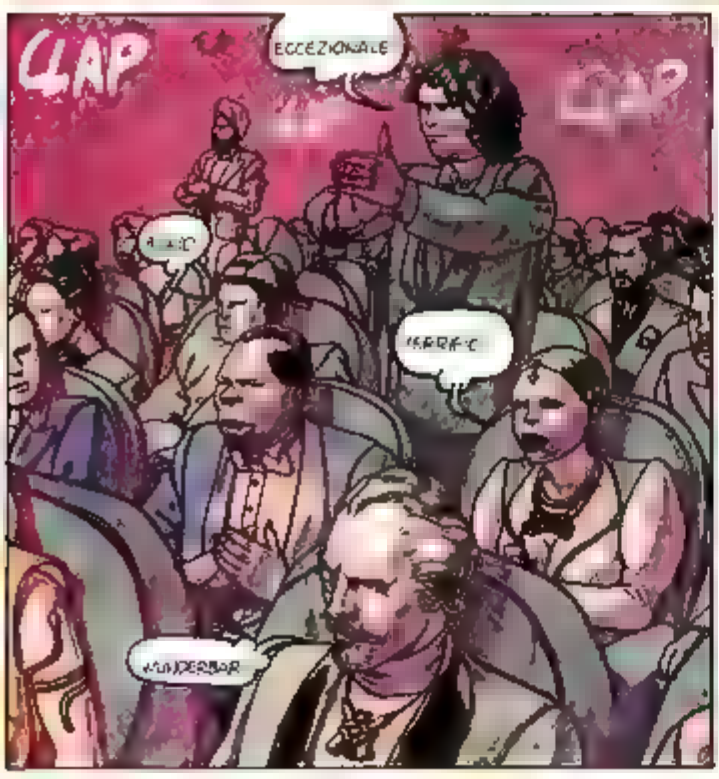
HM: So if your father hadn't taken the boat back to Italy, you would have been born in Philadelphia, and you could have realized your old dream of being President of the United States, and the world would have lost a great comics artist!

GL: Sort of makes you think, doesn't it? ●

"In Italy, even when there is a serious accident, there's always someone in the crowd who'll crack a joke."

OPENING NIGHT
HI'
ABOUT TIME
E SHOW STARTS
NENTY MINUTES
ERE HAVE YOU
BEEN?
WE WENT TO A CLUB IN THE BRONX DOGHEAD I STARTED TO TAP DANCE AND THEY MADE FUN OF ME SO I HAD TO BEAT IN THEIR BRAINS'
NICE WORK' GO CHANGE
LUBNA AND I WILL FOLLOW THE SHOW FROM A BOX ABOVE THE STAGE GOOD LUCK
JUST ONE HALF AN HOUR LATER RANXEROX 'S THE HIT OF BROADWAY' THE PUBLIC 'S AT HIS FEET
CLAP!
CLAP!
CLAP!
CLAP!
RANXEROX
LAST WE READ, RANX WAS RECRUITED TO STAR IN A NEW BROADWAY SHOW ABOUT THE LIFE AND TIMES OF FRED ASTAIRE. YEP, RANX WAS CAST AS THE OL' HOOFER HIMSELF




CLAP
ECCEZIONALE
WONDERBAR

THIS IS GREAT DOPE! BRAVO, RANX! COME ON, KISS ME

WHAT?
NOOOOOO
VRR KLIC
LEAVE LUBNA ALONE YOU SLOB
?

I'M GOING TO RUIN YOU, MISTER
HE'S GONE CRAZY HELP
CRACK
HEY MADMAN YOU JEALOUS?
COME ON IDE OUT
LET GO! YOU'RE HURTING ME YOU'RE GONNA REGRET THIS!

LATER AT THE CORNER OF 42ND AND BROADWAY
HARHAR A LOVER'S QUARREL
LISTEN, LUBNA THIS HURTS ME MORE THAN IT HURTS YOU AFTER ALL I'VE BEEN THROUGH FOR YOU MEMORIZING ALL THOSE SONGS AND FILMS DID YOU SEE THE ONE WHERE FRED DANCES ON THE CEILING? OR THE ONE WHERE FRED AND GINGER GET TOGETHER AND
THE END -FOR NOW- BUT RANX AND LUBNA WILL RETURN AFTER CHRISTMAS THAT IS, IF LUBNA BEHAVES!

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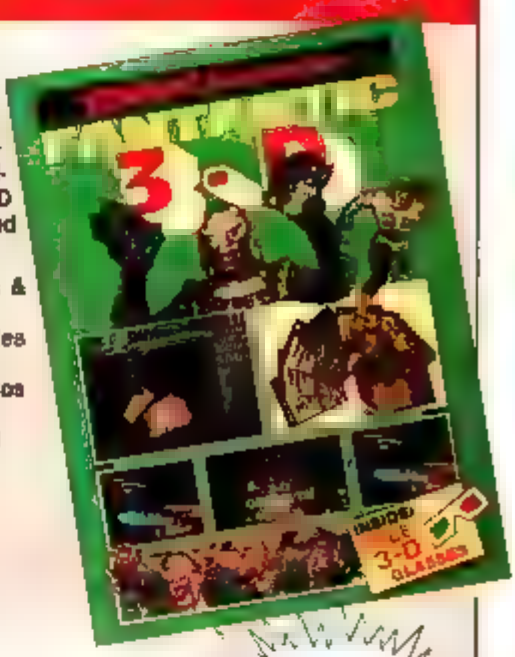

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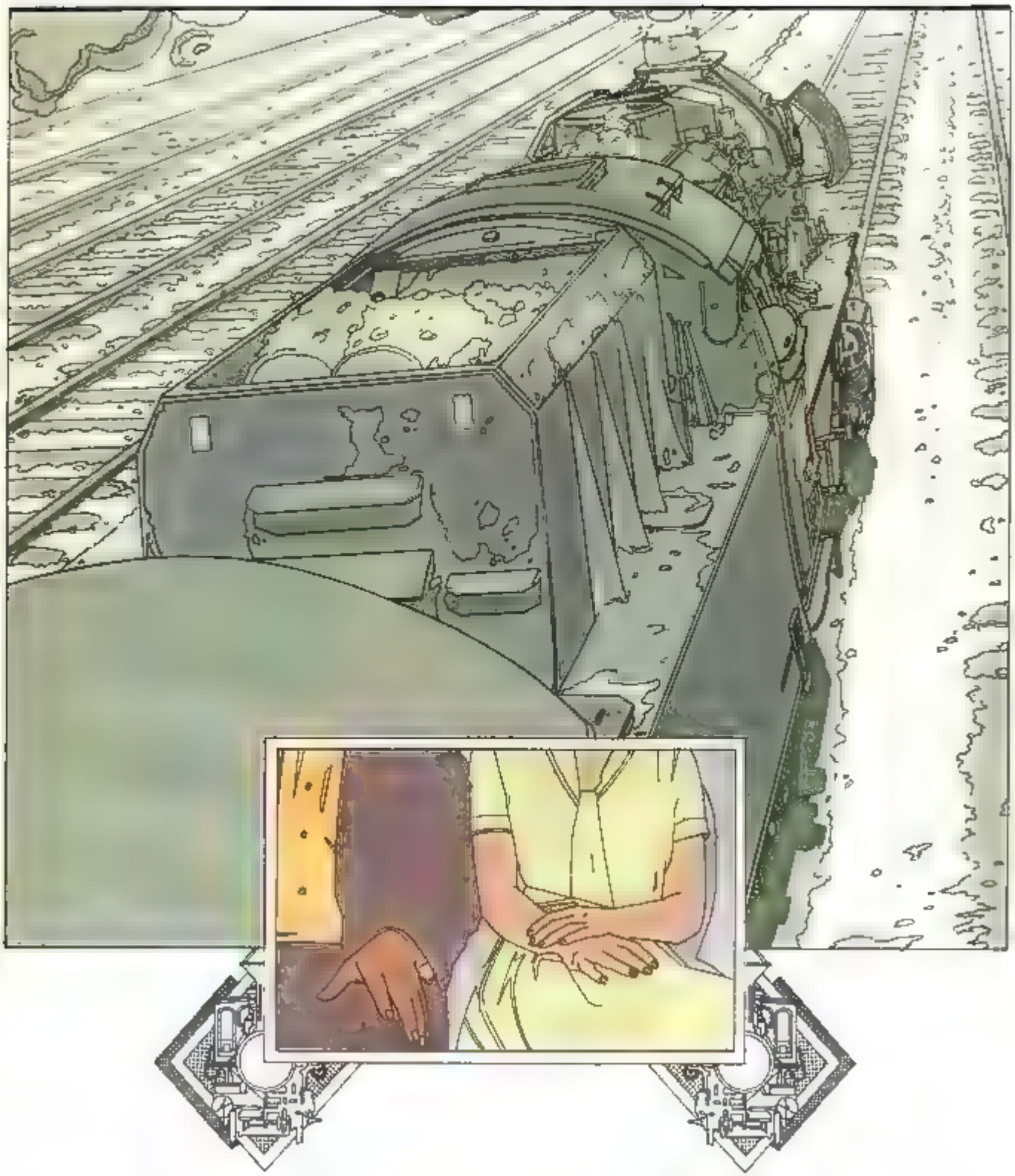
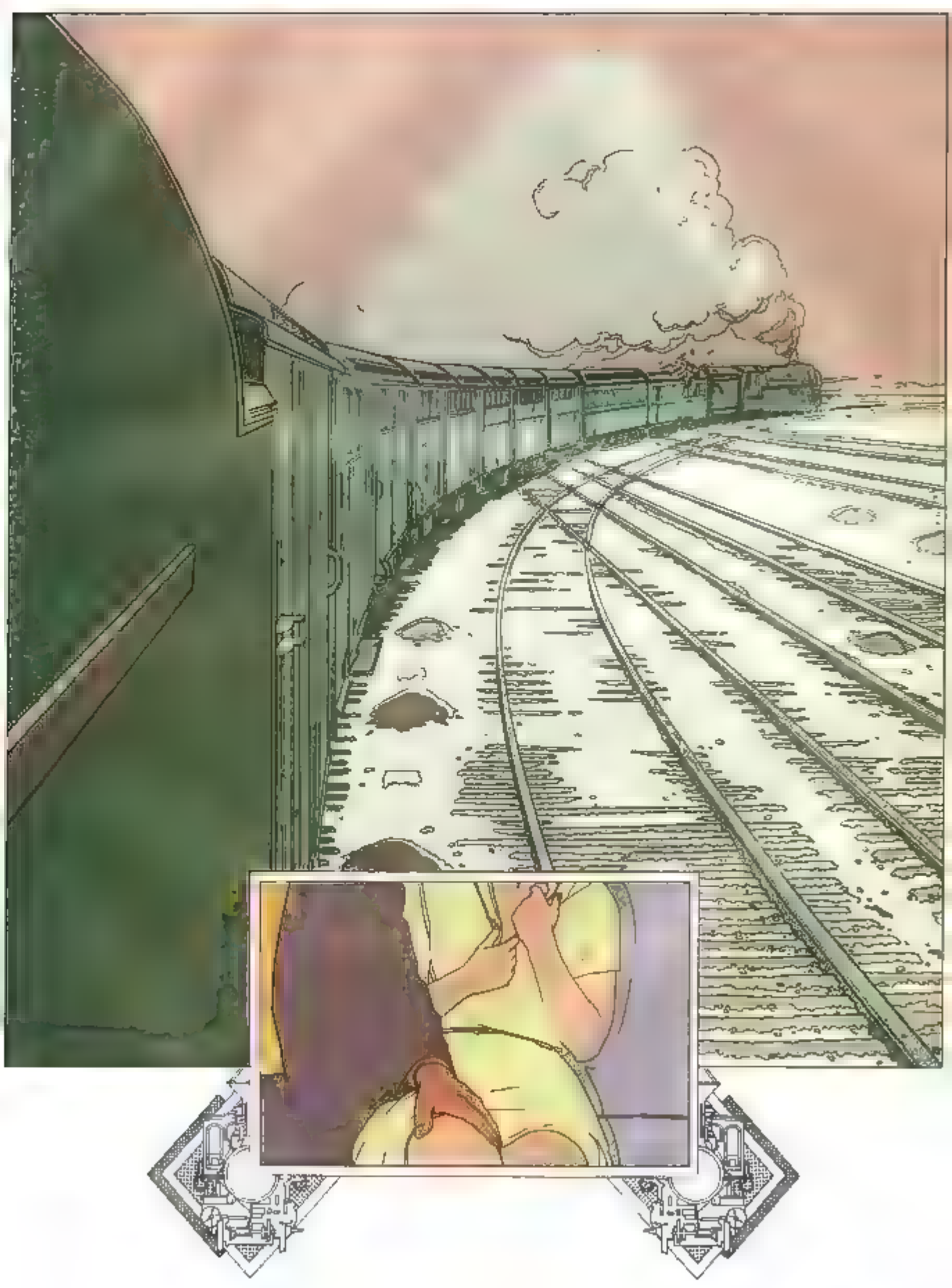
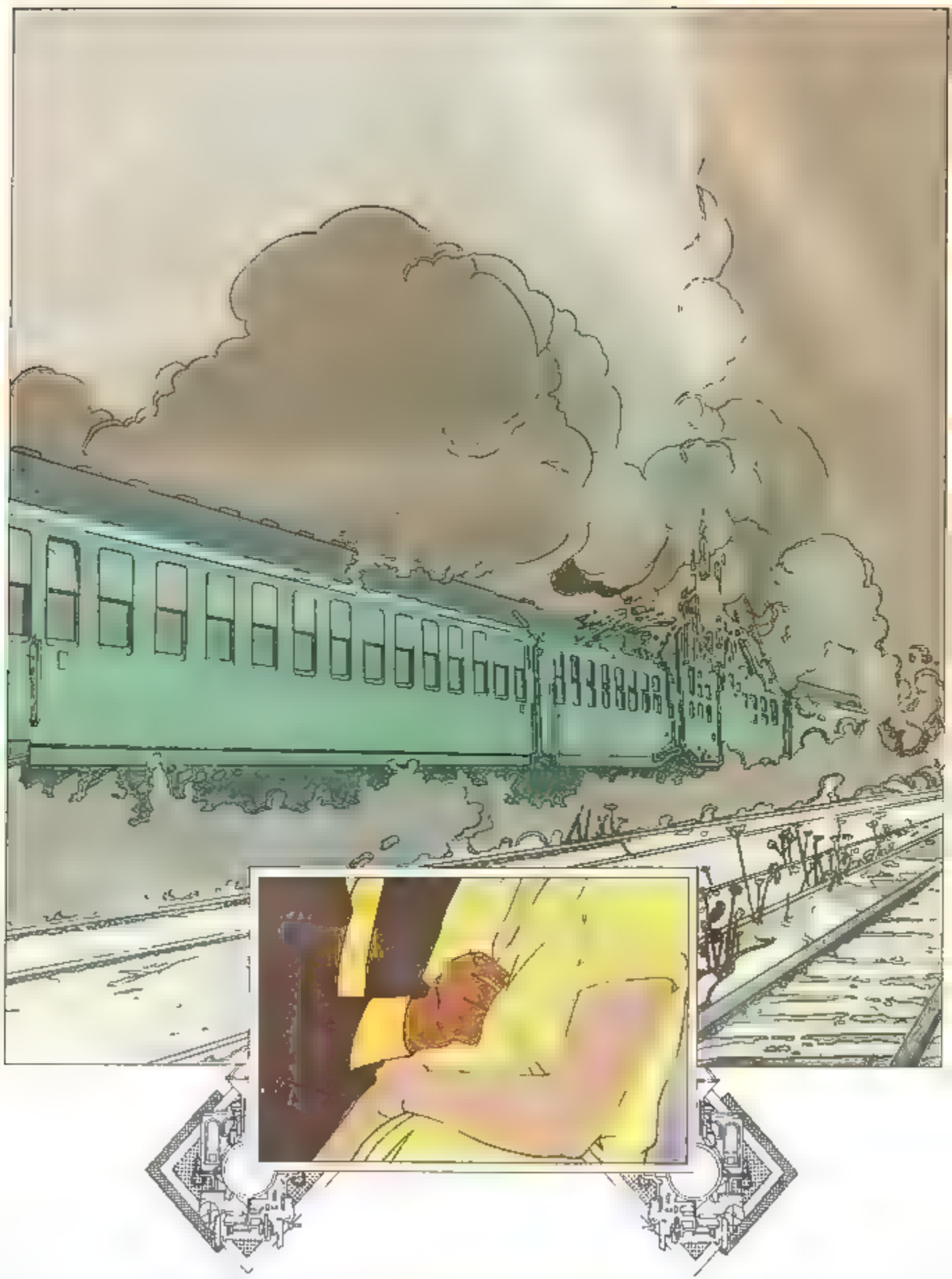
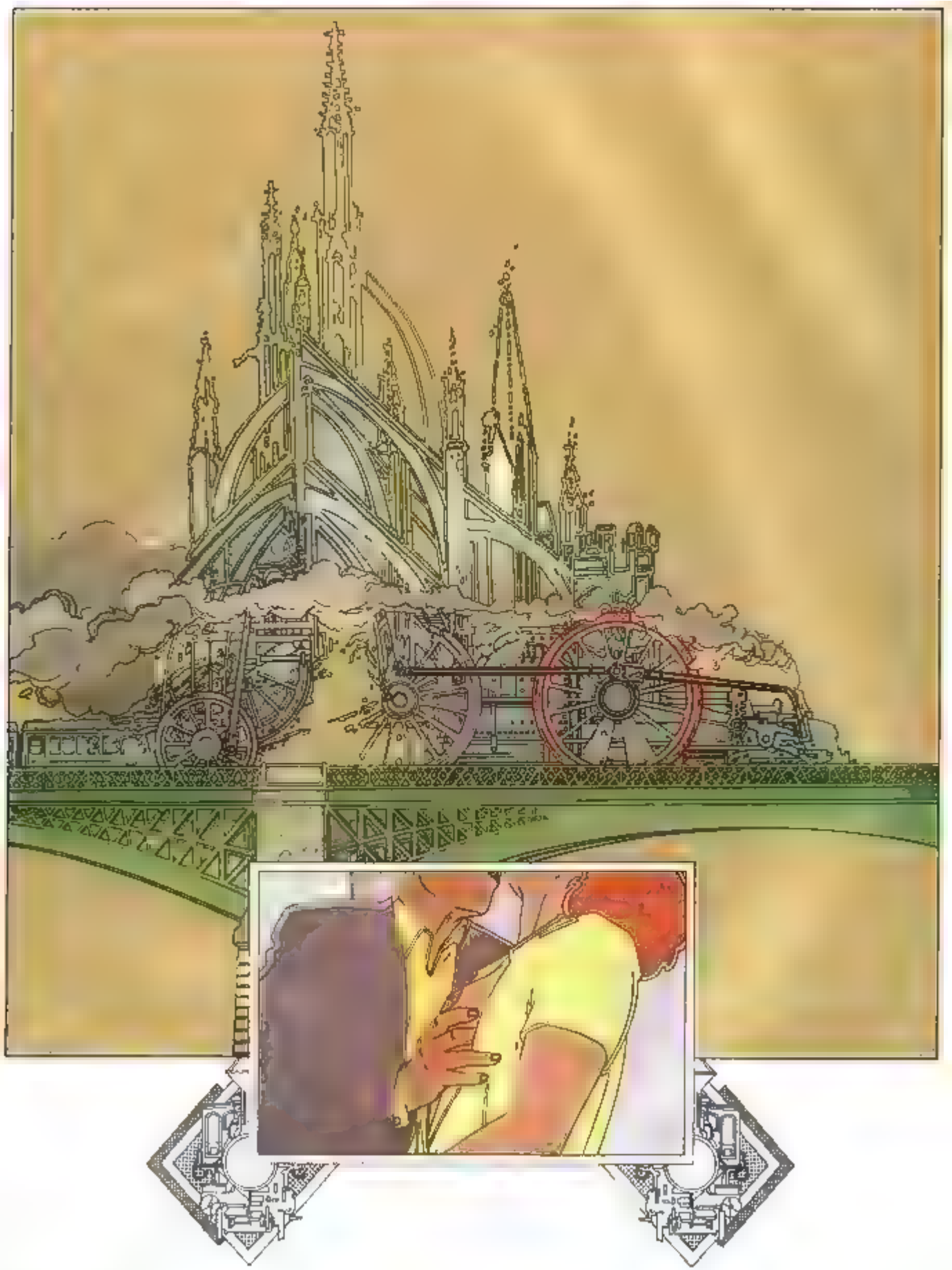
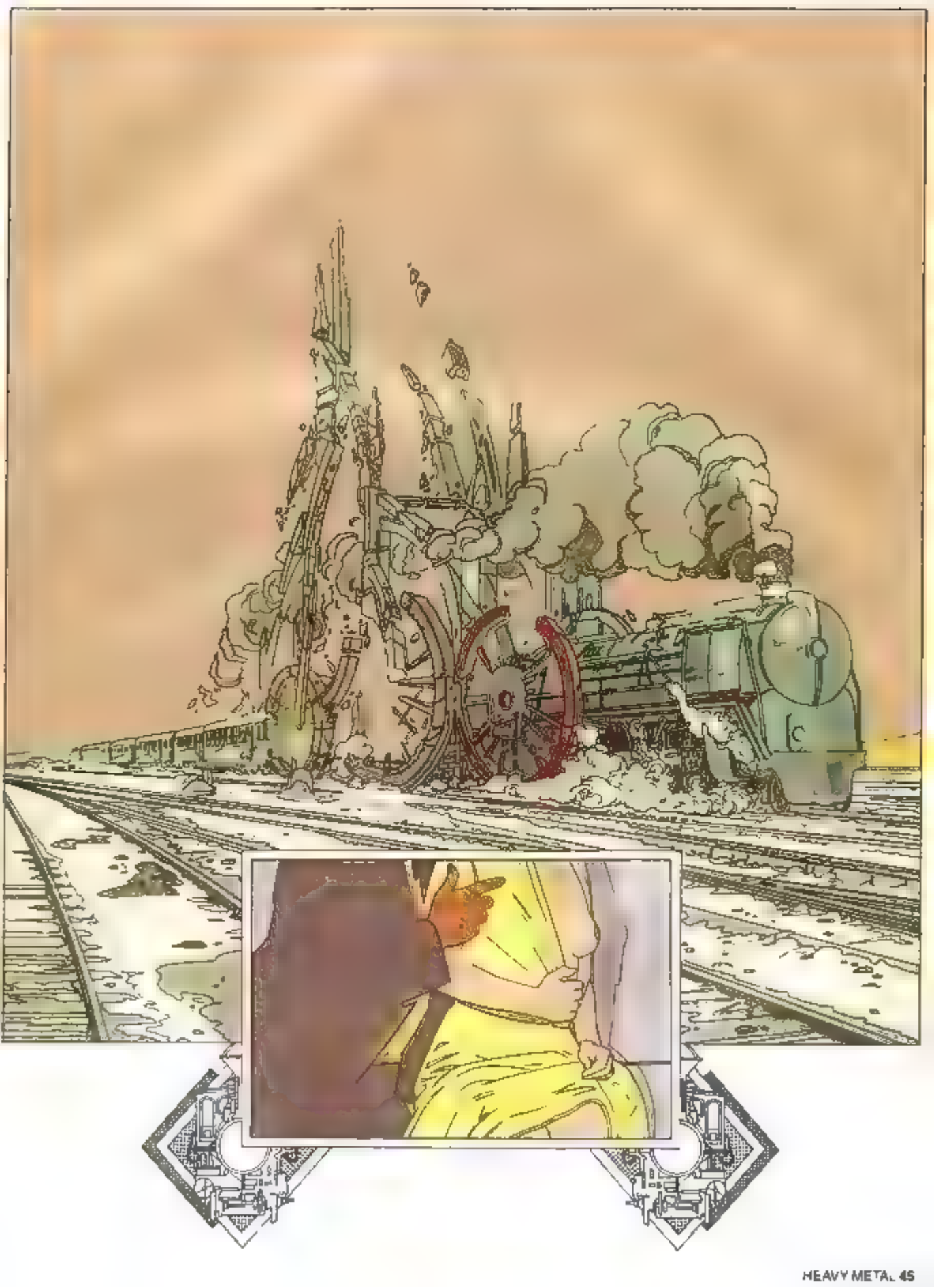
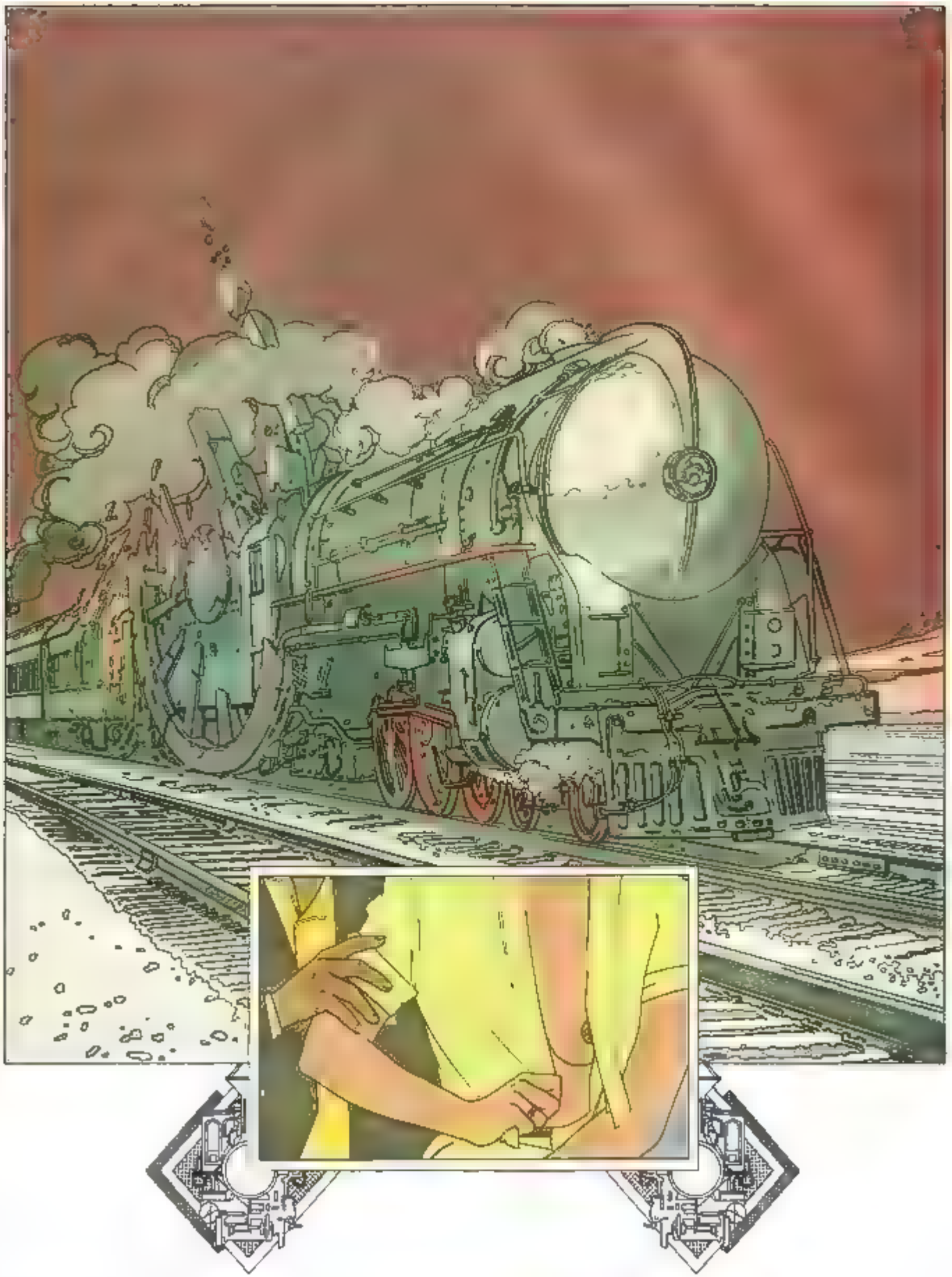












END

LOLLA

SO FAR HAVING BECOME WILDLY ENAMORED OF THE BEAUTIFUL LOLLA OUR MYSTIFIED HERO WAS READY TO TURN TO VIOLENCE TO MAKE HER HIS LOVER AFTER A MYSTERIOUS OLD MAN HAS PROMISED THE LOVELY FELLOW A RARE PRIZE THE BODY OF LOLLA

NOW DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT I SAID? ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS TO UNDRESS AND STAND NAKED BESIDE HER IN THE MOONLIGHT
AND WHAT ABOUT THE GUARDS
HE'LL SCREAM HE'LL SOUND THE ALARM BUT HE'LL BE POWERLESS FOR A SHORT TIME ENOUGH TIME FOR YOU NOW GO HERE SHE COMES
GO AHEAD
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU COME CLOSER

IS FORBIDDEN
ALERT! ALERT!
ALERT! ALERT!

ALERT!
BO
ALERT/
ALERT/
GET INTO THE BUBBLE!

ALERT! ALERT! ALERT!

ALERT
ALERT
HEHEH
HEH!

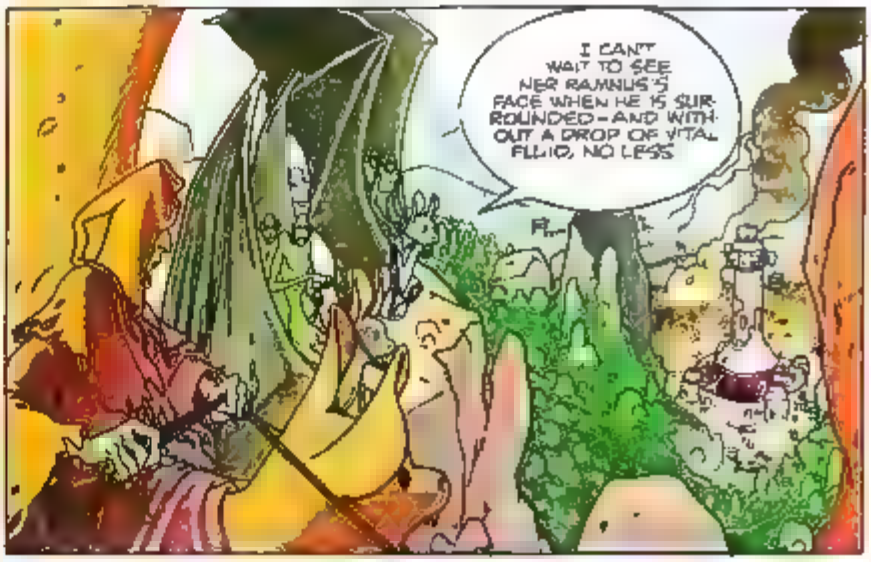
WHERE DID THEY GO?
HE DIDN'T KNOW SO WHY SHOULD I?
HE HAD A RENDEZVOUS WITH THE MOON WITH THE MOON!
NOW HE IS GONE WITH THE MOON!
BUT THERE IS NO MORE MOON!

NO MORE MOON! NO MORE MOON! NO MORE!

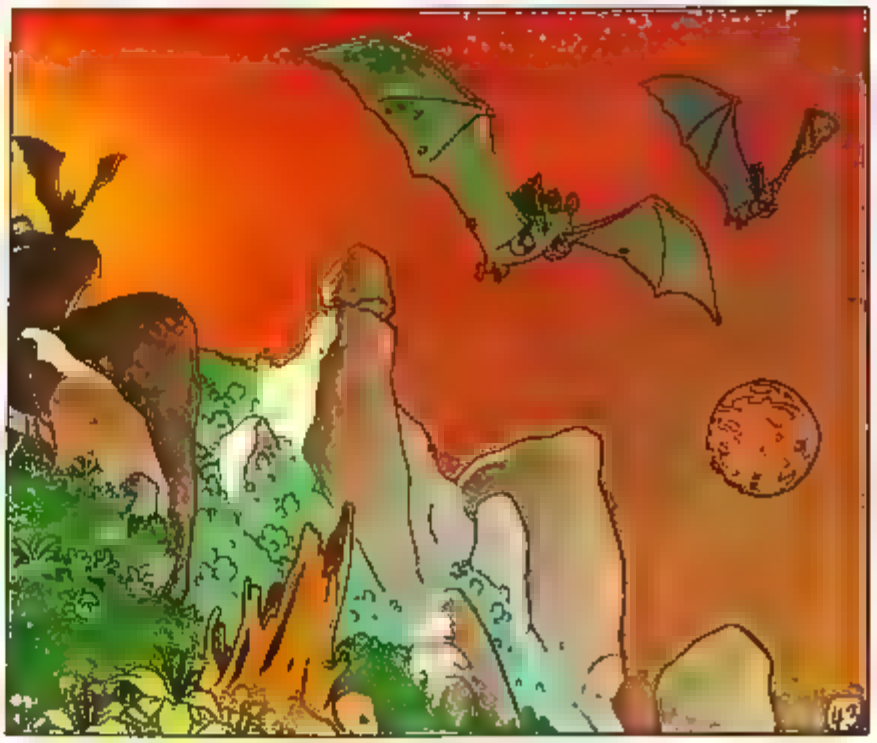
The Fifth Song

When Terror Triumphs

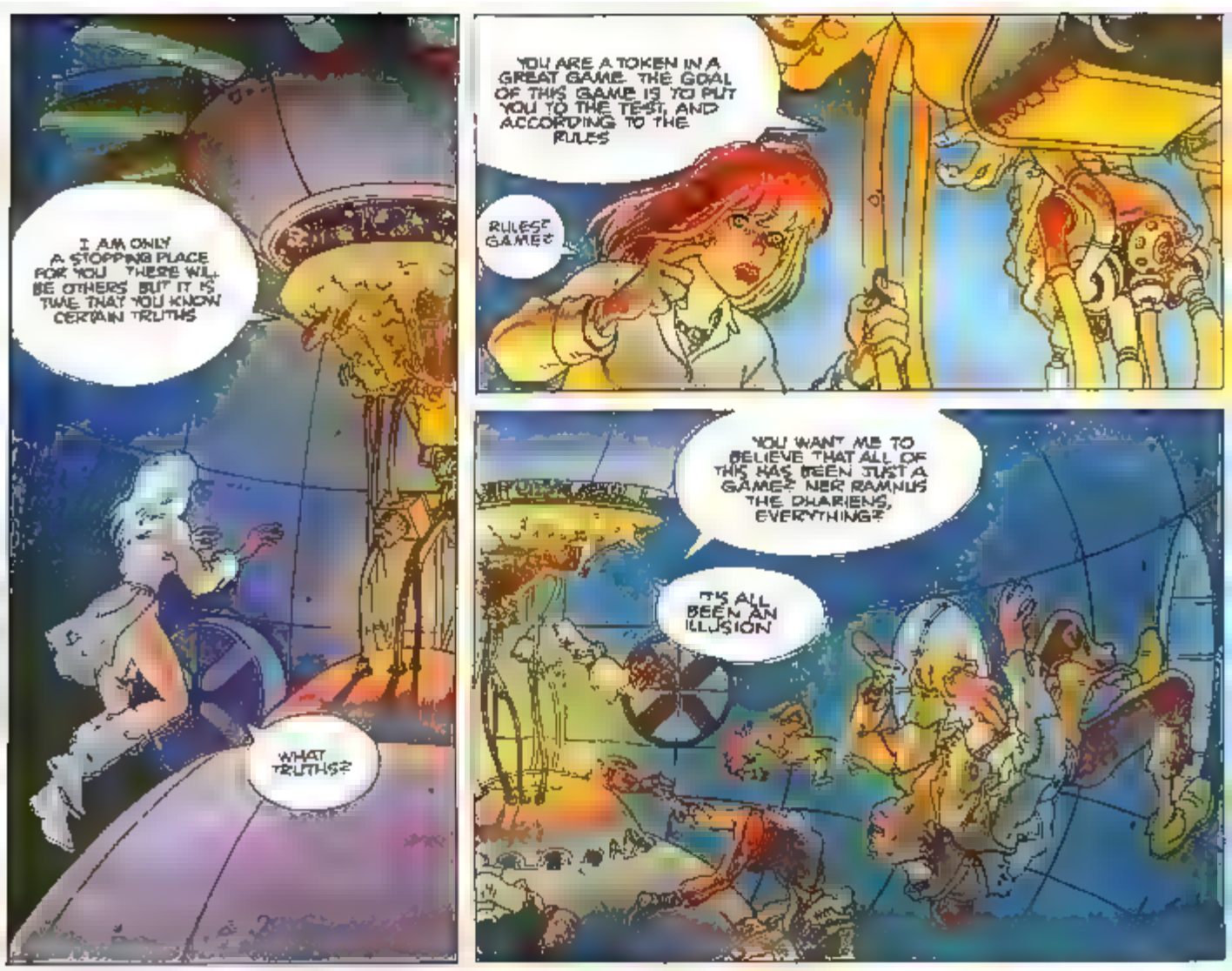
by Arno and Jodorowsky



IT'S TIME YOU RETURN TO AVISPIA. THE CARGO MUST REACH THERE BY MORNING! AND TRY TO AVOID THE WHITE WIZARD! I WILL JOIN YOU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

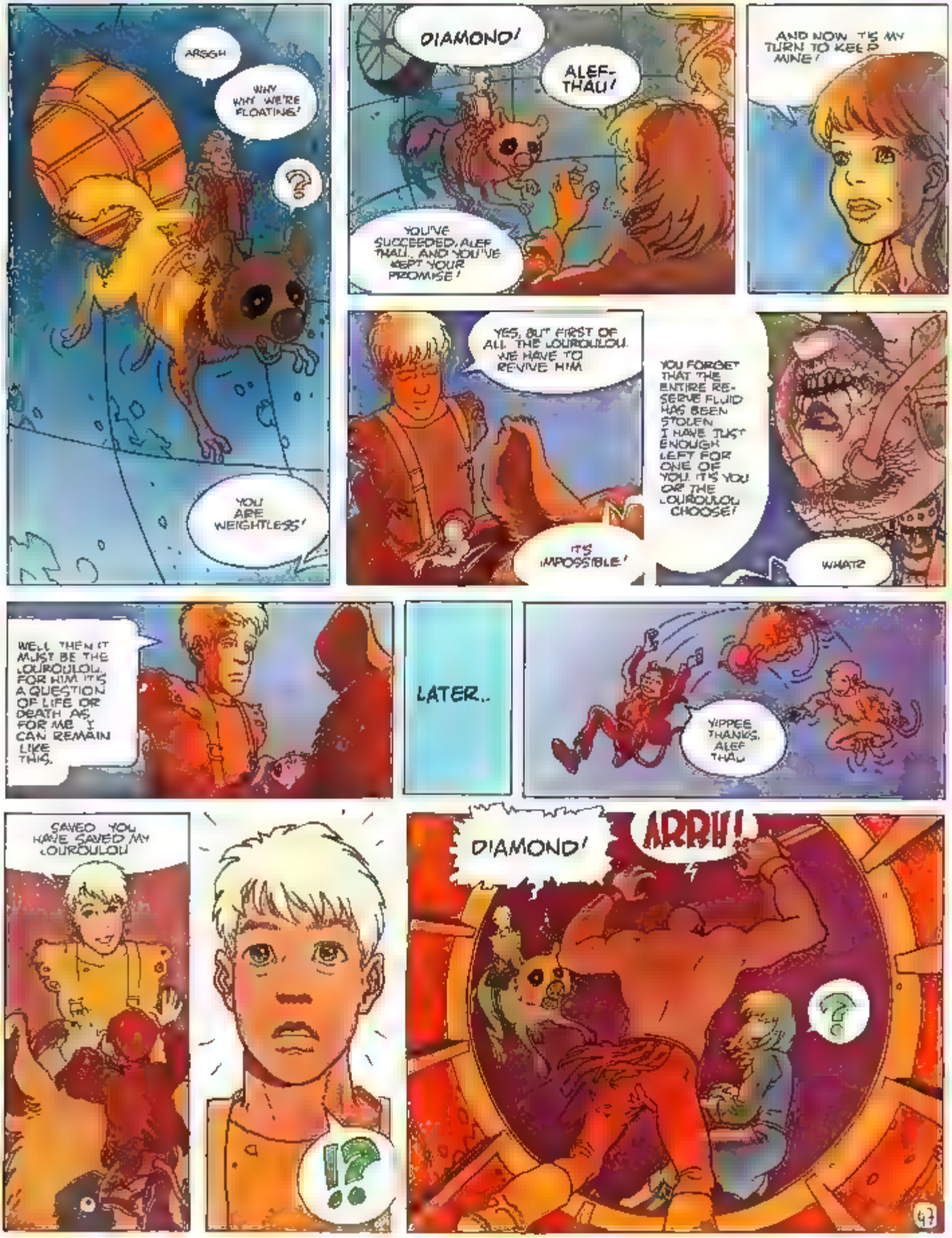


ALEF: THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO ENTER!
BUT I MUST!
BOUM BOM
WHAT SHOULD WE DO, HOG?
HMMMM I THINK I KNOW.
DIAMOND HAS ENTERED THE NERVE CENTER OF THE SPACE CRAFT.
?!
COME CLOSER DON'T BE AFRAID YOU ARE SAFE HERE
BUT ALL OF THESE PEOPLE ARE DEAD.
THEY ARE THIEVES AND INTRUDERS BUT LET'S NOT WASTE ANY TIME I AM DYING FROM LACK OF FLUID I MUST MAKE THE CONNECTION OR ELSE ..
LACK OF VITAL FLUIDS BUT THERE'S AN ENTIRE RESERVE! WHAT CONNECTION ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHO ARE YOU?


I AM ONLY A STOPPING PLACE FOR YOU. THERE WILL BE OTHERS. BUT IT IS TIME THAT YOU KNOW CERTAIN TRUTHS
WHAT TRUTHS?
YOU ARE A TOKEN IN A GREAT GAME. THE GOAL OF THIS GAME IS TO PUT YOU TO THE TEST, AND ACCORDING TO THE RULES
RULES? GAME?
YOU WANT ME TO BELIEVE THAT ALL OF THIS HAS BEEN JUST A GAME? NER RAMNUS THE DHARIENS, EVERYTHING?
IT'S ALL BEEN AN ILLUSION

OOOOH.. I FEEL STRANGE'
SOMEONE IS CALLING ME. YES, CALLING ME FOR HELP!
I SEE THEM. THEY ARE BLOCKED BY THE ENTRANCE LOCK! IT MUST BE OPENED!
THIS SHIP, YOU, AND I ARE ONE. KEEP THAT KNOWLEDGE WITH YOU ALWAYS AND HE WILL OBEY YOU.
45

MOWEVER, IN ONE OF THE SHIP'S CORRIDORS
ALL THE FLUID IS GONE HE HAS TAKEN EVERYTHING MY MEN HAVE FLED ALSO SWEET VENGEANCE DO ME PROUD!
YES I FEEL EVERY NOOK, EVERY COR-R'DOR EVERY DOOR
AND SUDDENLY
IT'S A MIRACLE
THE DOOR IS OPEN
LET'S GO
NO!
ALEF-THAU! ONLY HE CAN GO THROUGH!
IT'S HER VOICE, HOS T'S DIAMOND! SHE'S CALLING ME!
TAKE THE LOUROULOU GO AND HAVE FAITH
HUHE
WHAT ABOUT IC?
LET HIM GO BY
GO TOWARDS THE LIGHT!
?
46


ARGGH
WHY WHY WE'RE FLOATING!
?
YOU ARE WEIGHTLESS!
DIAMOND!
ALEF-THAU!
YOU'VE SUCCEEDED, ALEF THAU.. AND YOU'VE KEPT YOUR PROMISE!
AND NOW IT'S MY TURN TO KEEP MINE!
YES, BUT FIRST OF ALL THE LOUROULOU. WE HAVE TO REVIVE HIM.
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
YOU FORGET THAT THE ENTIRE RESERVE FLUID HAS BEEN STOLEN I HAVE JUST ENOUGH LEFT FOR ONE OF YOU. IT'S YOU OR THE LOUROULOU CHOOSE!
WHAT?
WELL THEN IT MUST BE THE LOUROULOU. FOR HIM IT'S A QUESTION OF LIFE OR DEATH AS FOR ME I CAN REMAIN LIKE THIS.
LATER..
YIPPEE THANKS, ALEF THAU
SAVED YOU HAVE SAVED MY LOUROULOU
!?
DIAMOND!
ARRH!
?
47

DIA-DIAMOND ?
HE HE HAS DIS APPEARED. WHAT HAPPENED? I AM NOT DEAD, AM I?
YOU CAN SUF FER BUT YOU CAN'T DIE. YOU ARE NOT LIKE THE OTHERS WHO ARE PART OF ALL THIS YOU YOU EXIST!
I'M IMMORTAL?
HOW IS IT THAT I DON'T EXIST?
AND AS IT TURNS OUT THERE IS ENOUGH VITAL FLUID FOR THE ARMS AND LEGS OF YOUNG ALEF THAU
HOO RA

A LITTLE LATER
FIRST OF ALL THE LEGS
READY?
I'M READY, DIAMOND
BRO
ALEF THAU! WAKE UP!
49

BUT WHAT IS IT? DIAMOND? DIAMOND?
AOUH..
I MUST FIND HER
OVER THERE
DIAMOND!
?
DIAMOND!
50

ALEF-THAU!
THEY ABANDONED US BECAUSE THEY HAVEN'T FOUND THE VITAL FLUID! AS FOR THE VOULPS, THEY'VE PAID THEIR DEBT!
TWO DAYS LATER
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE, ALEF-THAU. A BARRIER OF NEGATIVE ENERGY PREVENTS ME FROM FINDING DIAMOND.
EVEN WITH MY BONES, I AM FINDING IT DIFFICULT
NO ALEF THAU! DON'T SPLIT YOURSELF!
IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!
HIS AURA RISKS BEING DEVOURED!
THE BARRIER OF EVIL ENERGY! I MUST CROSS IT!

?!
DIAMOND! SHE'S THERE! I MUST CROSS IT!
HE'S DYING!
I MUST BRING HIM BACK QUICKLY!
OOF! JUST IN TIME
A LITTLE LATER
WE HAVE TO FIND HER, HOG
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE. ALEF-THAU! SHE'S IN THE MATRONAL ENDOCENTER! THAT PLACE IS INACCESSIBLE!
THAT DOESN'T MATTER. I WILL FIND HER AND EVEN IF I DON'T EXIST TO SOME, I WILL ALWAYS EXIST FOR HER!
THE END FOR NOW! MAYBE

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Cycle of the Werewolf

by Stephen King
Illustrated by Berni Wrightson

They canceled the Fourth of July.

Marty Coslaw gets remarkably little sympathy from the people closest to him when he tells them that. Perhaps it is because they simply don't understand the depth of his pain.

"Don't be foolish," his mother tells him brusquely—she is often brusque with him, and when she has to rationalize this brusqueness to herself, she tells herself she will not spoil the boy just because he is handicapped, because he is going to spend his life sitting in a wheelchair.

"Wait until next year!" his dad tells him, clapping him on the back. "Twice as good! Twice as doodly-damn good! You'll see, little bitty buddy! Hey, hey!"

Herman Coslaw is the phys ed teacher at the Tarker's Mills grammar school, and he almost always talks to his son in what Marty thinks of as Dad's Big Pal voice. He also says "Hey, hey!" a great deal. The truth is, Marty makes Herman Coslaw a little nervous. Herman lives in a world of violently active children, kids who run races, bash baseballs, swim rally sprints. And in the midst of directing all this he would sometimes look up and see Marty, somewhere close by, sitting in his wheelchair, watching. It made Herman nervous, and when he was nervous, he spoke in his bellowing Big Pal voice, and said "Hey, hey!" or "doodly-damn" and called Marty his "little bitty buddy."

"Ha-ha, so you finally didn't get something you wanted!" his big sister says when he tries to tell her how he had looked forward to this night, how he looks forward to it every year, the flowers of light in the sky over the Commons, the flashgun pops of brightness followed by the thudding *KER WHAMP!* sounds that roll back and forth between the low hills that surround the town. Kate is thirteen to Marty's ten, and convinced that everyone loves Marty just because he can't walk. She is delighted that the fireworks have been canceled.

Even Grandfather Coslaw, who could usually be counted on for sympathy, hadn't been impressed. "Nobody is cancelin der fort of Choo-lie, boy," he said in his heavy Slavic accent. He was sitting on the veranda, and Marty buzzed out through the french doors in his battery-powered wheelchair to talk to him. Grandfather Coslaw sat looking down the slope of the lawn toward the woods, a glass of schnapps in one hand. This had happened on July 2, two days ago. "It's just the fireworks they cancel. And you know why."

Marty did. The killer, that was why. In the papers now they were calling him The Full Moon Killer, but Marty had heard plenty of whispers around school before classes had ended for the summer. Lots of kids were saying that The Full Moon Killer wasn't a real man at all, but some sort of supernatural creature. A werewolf, maybe. Marty didn't believe that—werewolves were strictly for the horror movies—but he supposed there could be some kind of crazy guy out there who only felt the urge to kill when the moon was full. The fireworks have been canceled because of their dirty rotten *curfew*.

In January, sitting in his wheelchair by the french doors and looking out onto the veranda, watching the wind blow bitter veils of snow across the frozen crust, or standing by the front door, stiff as a statue in his locked leg-braces, watching the other kids pull their sleds toward Wright's Hill, just *thinking* of the fireworks made a difference. Thinking of a warm summer night, a cold Coke, of fire-roses blooming in the dark, and pinwheels, and an American flag made of Roman candles.

But now they have canceled the fireworks . . . and no matter what anyone says, Marty feels that it is really the Fourth *itself*—*his* Fourth—that they have done to death.

Only his Uncle Al, who blew into town late this morning to have the traditional salmon and fresh peas with the family, had understood. He had listened closely, standing on the veranda tiles in his dripping bathing suit (the others were swimming and laughing in the Coslaw's new pool on the other side of the house) after lunch.

Marty finished and looked at Uncle Al anxiously.

"Do you see what I mean? Do you get it? It hasn't got

anything to do with being crippled, like Katie says, or getting the fireworks all mixed up with America, like Granpa thinks. It's just not right—when you look forward to something for so long . . . it's not right for Victor Bowie and some dumb town *council* to come along and take it away. Not when it's something you really need. Do you get it?"

There was a long, agonizing pause while Uncle Al considered Marty's question. Time enough for Marty to hear the lock-rattle of the diving board at the deep end of the pool, followed by Dad's hearty bellow: "Lookin' good, Kate! Hey, hey! Lookin' *reeeeal* good!"

Then Uncle Al said quietly, "Sure I get it. And I got something for you, I think. Maybe you can make your own Fourth."

"My own Fourth? What do you mean?"

"Come on out to my car, Marty. I've got something—well, I'll show you." And he was striding away along the concrete path that circled the house before Marty could ask him what he meant.

His wheelchair hummed along the path to the driveway, away from the sounds of the pool—splashes, laughing screams, the *kathummmm* of the diving board. Away from his father's booming Big Pal voice. The sound of his wheelchair was a low, steady hum that Marty barely heard—all his life that sound, and the clank of his braces, had been the music of his movement.

Uncle Al's car was a low-slung Mercedes convertible. Marty knew his parents disapproved of it ("Twenty-eight-thousand-dollar death-trap," his mother had once called it with a brusque attic sniff), but Marty loved it. Once Uncle Al had taken him for a ride on some of the back roads that crisscrossed Tarker's Mills, and he had driven fast—seventy, maybe eighty. He wouldn't tell Marty how fast they were going. "If you don't know, you won't be scared," he had said. But Marty hadn't been scared. His belly had been sore the next day from laughing.

Uncle Al took something out of the glove-compartment of his car, and as Marty rolled up and stopped, he put a bulky cellophane package on the boy's withered thighs. "Here you go, kid," he said. "Happy Fourth of July."

The first thing Marty saw were exotic Chinese markings on the package's label. Then he saw what was inside, and his heart seemed to squeeze up in his chest. The cellophane package was full of fireworks.

"The ones that look like pyramids are Twizzers," Uncle Al said.

Marty, absolutely stunned with joy, moved his lips to speak, but nothing came out.

"Light the fuses, set them down, and they spray as many colors as there are on a dragon's breath. The tubes with the thin sticks coming out of them are bottle-rockets. Put them in an empty Coke bottle and up they go. The little ones are fountains. There are two Roman candles . . . and of course, a package of firecrackers. But you better set those off tomorrow."

Uncle Al cast an eye toward the noises coming from the pool.

"Thank you!" Marty was finally able to gasp. "Thank you, Uncle Al!"

"Just keep mum about where you got them," Uncle Al said. "A nod's as good as a wink to a blind horse, right?"

"Right, right," Marty babbled, although he had no idea what nods, winks, and blind horses had to do with fireworks. "But are you sure you don't want them, Uncle Al?"

"I can get more," Uncle Al said. "I know a guy over in Bridgton. He'll be doing business until it gets dark." He put a hand on Marty's head. "You keep your Fourth after everyone else goes to bed. Don't shoot off any of the noisy ones and wake them all up. And for Christ's sake don't blow your hand off, or my big sis will never speak to me again."

Then Uncle Al laughed and climbed into his car and roared the engine into life. He raised his hand in a half-salute to Marty and then was gone while Marty was still trying to stutter his thanks. He sat there for a moment looking after his uncle, swallowing hard to keep from crying. Then he put the packet of fireworks into his shirt and buzzed back to the house and his room. In his mind he was already waiting for night to come and everyone to be asleep.

He is the first one in bed that night. His mother comes in and kisses him goodnight (brusquely, not looking at his stick-like legs under the sheet). "You okay, Marty?"

"Yes, Mom."

She pauses, as if to say something more, and then gives her head a little shake. She leaves.

His sister Kate comes in. She doesn't kiss him; merely leans her head close to his neck so he can smell the chlorine in her hair and she whispers, "See? You don't always get what you want just because you're a cripple."

"You might be surprised what I get," he says softly, and she regards him for a moment with narrow suspicion before going out.

His father comes in last and sits on the side of Marty's bed. He speaks in his booming Big Pal voice. "Everything okay, big guy? You're off to bed early. *Real* early."

"Just feeling a little tired, Daddy."

"Okay." He claps one of Marty's wasted legs with his big hand, winces unconsciously, and then gets up in a hurry. "Sorry about the fireworks, but just wait till next year! Hey, hey! Rootie-patootie!"

Marty smiles a small, secret smile.

So then he begins the waiting for the rest of the house to go to bed. It takes a long time. The TV runs on and on in the living room, the canned laughtracks often augmented by Katie's shrill giggles. The toilet in Granpa's bedroom goes with a bang and a flush. His mother chats on the phone, wishes someone a happy Fourth, says yes, it was a shame the fireworks show had been canceled, but she thought that, under the circumstances, everyone understood why it had to be. Yes, Marty had been disappointed. Once, near the end of her conversation, she laughs, and when she laughs, she doesn't sound a bit brusque. She hardly ever laughs around Marty.

Every now and then, as seven-thirty became eight and nine, his hand creeps under his pillow to make sure the cellophane bag of fireworks is still there. Around nine-thirty, when the moon gets high enough to peer into his window and flood his room with silvery light, the house finally begins to wind down.

The TV clicks off. Katie goes to bed, protesting that all her friends got to stay up *late* in the summer. After she's gone, Marty's folks sit in the parlor awhile longer; their conversation only murmurs. And

. . . and maybe he slept, because when he next touches the wonderful bag of fireworks, he realizes that the house is totally still and the moon has become even brighter—bright enough to cast shadows. He takes the bag out along with the book of matches he found earlier. He tucks his pajama shirt into his pajama pants; drops both the bag and the matches into his shirt, and prepares to get out of bed.

This is an operation for Marty, but not a painful one, as people sometimes seemed to think. There is no feeling of any kind in his legs, so there can be no pain. He grips the headboard of the bed, pulls himself up to a sitting position, and then shifts his legs over the edge of the bed one by one. He

does this one-handed, using his other hand to hold the rail which begins at his bed and runs all the way around the room. Once he had tried moving his legs with both hands and somersaulted helplessly head over heels onto the floor. The crash brought everyone running. "You stupid show-off!" Kate had whispered fiercely into his ear after he had been helped into his chair, a little shaken up but laughing crazily in spite of the swelling on one temple and his split lip. "You want to kill yourself? Huh?" And then she had run out of the room, crying.

Once he's sitting on the edge of the bed, he wipes his hands on the front of his shirt to make sure they're dry and won't slip. Then he uses the rail to go hand over hand to his wheelchair. His useless scarecrow legs, so much dead weight, drag along behind him. The moonlight is bright enough to cast his shadow, bright and crisp, on the floor ahead of him.

His wheelchair is on the brake, and he swings into it with confident ease. He pauses for a moment, catching his breath, listening to the silence of the house. *Don't shoot off any of the noisy ones tonight,* Uncle Al had said, and listening to the silence, Marty knows that was right. He will keep his Fourth by himself and to himself and no one will know. At least not until tomorrow when they see the blackened husks of the twizzers and the fountains out on the veranda, and then it wouldn't matter. *As many colors as there are on a dragon's breath,* Uncle Al had said. But Marty supposes there's no law against a dragon breathing silently.

He lets the brake off his chair and flips the power switch. The little amber eye, the one that means his battery is well-charged, comes on in the dark. Marty pushes RIGHT TURN. The chair rotates right. Hey, hey. When it is facing the veranda doors, he pushes FORWARD. The chair rolls forward, humming quietly.

Marty slips the latch on the double doors, pushes FORWARD again, and rolls outside. He tears open the wonderful bag of fireworks and then pauses for a moment, captivated by the summer night—the somnolent chirr of the crickets, the low, fragrant breeze that barely stirs the leaves of the trees at the edge of the woods, the almost unearthly radiance of the moon.

He can wait no longer. He brings out a snake, strikes a match, lights its fuse, and watches in entranced silence as it splutters green-blue fire and grows magically, writhing and spitting flame from its tail.

The Fourth, he thinks, his eyes alight. *The Fourth, the Fourth, happy Fourth of July to me!*

The snake's bright flame gutters low, flickers, goes out. Marty lights one of the triangular twizzers and watches as it spouts fire as yellow as his dad's lucky golf shirt. Before it can go out, he lights a second that shoots off light as dusky red as the roses which grow beside the picket fence around the new pool. Now a wonderful smell of spent powder fills the night for the wind to rafter and pull slowly away.

His groping hands pull out the flat packet of firecrackers next, and he has opened them before he realizes that to light these would be calamity—their jumping, snapping machine-gun roar would wake the whole neighborhood: fire, flood, alarm, excursion. All of those, and one ten-year-old boy named Martin Coslaw in the doghouse until Christmas, most likely.

He pushes the Black Cats further up on his lap, gropes happily in the bag again, and comes out with the biggest twizzer of all—a World Class Twizzer if ever there was one. It is almost as big as his closed fist. He lights it with mixed fright and delight, and tosses it.

Red light as bright as hellfire fills the night, and it is by this shifting, feverish glow that Marty sees the bushes at the fringe of the woods below the veranda shake and part. There is a low noise, half-cough, half-snarl. The Beast appears.

It stands for a moment at the base of the lawn and seems to scent the air. . . and then it begins to shamble up the slope toward where Marty sits on the slate flagstones in his wheelchair, his eyes bulging, his upper body shrinking against the canvas back of his chair. The Beast is hunched over, but it is clearly walking on its two rear legs. Walking the way a man would walk. The red light of the twizzer skates hellishly across its green eyes.

It moves slowly, its wide nostrils flaring rhythmically. Scenting prey, almost surely scenting that prey's weakness. Marty can *smell* it—its hair, its sweat, its savagery. It grunts again. Its thick upper lip, the color of liver, wrinkles back to show its heavy tusk-like teeth. Its pelt is painted a dull silvery-red.

It has almost reached him—its clawed hands, so like-unlike human hands, reaching for his throat—when the boy remembers the packet of firecrackers. Hardly aware he is going to do it, he strikes a match and touches it to the master fuse. The fuse spits a hot line of red sparks that singe the fine hair on the back of his hand, crisping them. The werewolf, momentarily offbalance, draws backwards, uttering a questioning grunt that, like his hands, is nearly human. Marty throws the packet of firecrackers in its face.

They go off in a banging, flashing train of light and sound. The beast utters a screech-roar of pain and rage; . . . its backwards, clawing at the explosions that tattoo gra. . . are and burning gunpowder into its face. Marty sees one of its lamplike green eyes whuff out as four firecrackers go off at once with a terrific thundering KA-POW! at the side of its muzzle. Now its screams are pure agony. It claws at its face, bellowing, and as the first lights go on in the Coslaw house it turns and bounds back down the lawn toward the woods, leaving behind it only a smell of singed fur and the first frightened and bewildered cries from the house.

"What was that?" His mother's voice, not sounding a bit brusque.

"Who's there, goddammit?" His father, not sounding very much like a Big Pal.

"Marty?" Kate, her voice quavering, not sounding mean at all. "Marty, are you all right?"

Grandfather Coslaw sleeps through the whole thing.

Marty leans back in his wheelchair as the big red twizzer gutters its way to extinction. Its light is now the mild and lovely pink of an early sunrise. He is too shocked to weep. But his shock is not entirely a dark emotion, although the next day his parents will bundle him off to visit his Uncle Jim and Aunt Ida over in Stowe, Vermont, where he will stay until the end of summer vacation (the police concur; they feel that The Full Moon Killer might try to attack Marty again, and silence him). There is a deep exultation in him. It is stronger than the shock. He has looked into the terrible face of the Beast and lived. And there is simple, childlike joy in him, as well, a quiet joy he will never be able to communicate later to anyone, not even Uncle Al, who might have understood. He feels this joy because the fireworks have happened after all.

And while his parents stewed and wondered about his psyche, and if he would have complexes from the experience, Marty Coslaw came to believe in his heart that it had been the best Fourth of all.

Editor's note: The above excerpt is from Stephen King's new book Cycle of the Werewolf, *due out this Fall, and is* © *1983 by Land of Enchantment. The text is* © *1983 by Stephen King. The illustrations are* © *1983 by Bernie Wrightson. This book is one of a series of forthcoming books combining the talents of popular writers and illustrators.*

I'M AGE

WAS ON MY WAY TO DO SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT T WAS A BEAUT FUL DAY

THE CLOUDS WERE PACKED WHITE AND PURE AGAINST THE SKY I STOPPED TO WONDER.

THEN MY EYES FELL UPON THE DISTANT HILLS, PALE, PAINTED FLAT ALONG THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

THERE WAS A FA NT SOUND OF HUMMING AND MUSIC ALL AROUND. I SAT DOWN IN THE SWEET GRASS TO FIND IT ALL

I NEVER GOT TO WHEREVER IT WAS WAS GOING

I'LL GET THERE TOMORROW

BUT FIRST 'LL HAVE TO TAKE THE TIME TO STOP AND KILL THE ROSES

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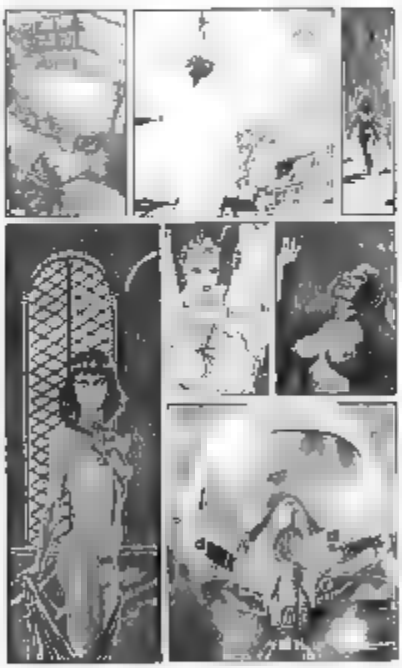

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MANIFESTO BY SETH AND PETER

CHAIN MAIL

Dear Lou.

Heavy Metal is a magazine of sex, violence and sadomasochism, it is also a magazine of poignancy and beauty. The new series "Ranxerox" is a synthesis of all these characteristics. I loved "Ranxerox" the first time I saw it; it's the best new series I've seen in years. When I received my August issue I quickly turned to "Ranxerox." The beauty and violence were progressing at "Ranxerox" speed when I was suddenly shocked by Ranxerox's reaction to the little girl selling flowers.

When Ranxerox crushed the girl's hand into a bloody pulp, a wave of disgust passed over me. *Heavy Metal* is a violent magazine, but I tolerate the violence, for the real world is probably worse. But when Ranxerox mashed that girl's hand, I wondered if the creators of "Ranxerox" had gone too far. The reaction of the bar's clientele made the scene even more ghastly. I wondered if it was time to cancel my subscription to *Heavy Metal*. But then I realised something. "Ranxerox" was making an important statement. Upton Sinclair effectively portrayed the corruption and inhumanity of the Chicago stockyards in his novel *The Jungle*. Tamburini and Liberatore effectively portray the sickness and depravity of a possible future in "Ranxerox."

It is a bleak future. A future of techno-bourgeois decadence at its worst. In this future, the crushing of a little girl's hand will gain admiration. The violence in "Ranxerox" is often senseless, but it does have a purpose (whether it's intended or not, I have no idea). The violence and decadence of "Ranxerox" show the reader what the technological world of tomorrow will be like if man loses *all* his wisdom and compassion on the road of progress. "Ranxerox" is not only entertaining in its sick way; it is also poignant. I still believe that crushing a little girl's hand for selling flowers is going too far, but that senseless act of violence has reminded me that a bright future is not inevitable; one must work for it.

Sincerely yours,
Charles Lai,
Palatine, IL

(Check out Liberatore's explanation of the "little girl" sequence in his interview this month.)

Heavy Metal

"Ranxerox" is the worst you've ever done. I am tearing the pages out of my mag and returning them to you.

So, your idea of a hero is an actual mindless machine who'll destroy anything available, even innocent bystanders. And you think that acquiring drugs is a suitable goal.

By printing "Ranxerox" you are pimping to the lowest level of cretins in the country, and you personally are no better than what you print.

Alex Weilgart
Oakland, CA

Dear Editors,

Your mag has a really bad reputation around here.

The general feeling is that *HM* magazine is some sort of sneaky pubescent tool for secret masturbation, something disguised in flashy covers to fool the mature adult public. I can understand my father saying, 'I'd rather see you buy beer than a piece of shit like this.' after all, he is fifty-seven and a high ranking officer in the U.S. Navy.

Personally, I find your magazine unique and fascinating. *Heavy Metal* is a real puzzler for me, this sense of obscure guilt I get buying and reading it—the bland indifference of the people I've shown it to. I don't get it. Am I an asshole, or what?

N. C. Collier, Jr.
Blacksburg, SC

Dear Mr. Findley

Between you and me, I think most of *Heavy Metal* is an outlet for nuts who can't afford therapy but I keep subscribing because every now and then Up Pops the Superior Man. As for your "Disappearin' Chickens," that strip is another reason for being grateful America is indeed the best country, how kind of you to let me in here. Your creation is perfect in every way. (So it seems to me, but then who am I? I often wonder.) Technically superb. Both realistically visual and fraught with genius. Most acceptable characters, though truly bizarre. Even a touch of true love (the handholding of the sleeping lovers). We must have that (us readers) in strips or we'll be out of it all, and out is out, in a stark insanity we can't hold it together. After all, we must keep functioning if we want to learn to appreciate the environment.

Janwillem Van de Wetering
Surry, ME

Ms. Editor

Let me start by expressing my total admiration for *Heavy Metal* magazine. I am a steady patron because of the fantasy release your rag provides me. I have always been submerged by the quality and concepts of your arts. I am an artist and am not in the habit of dissection when it comes to fellow artists. I must express my disappointment at Corben's contribution in your June '83 issue. The facial attachment is copied and the art though near perfection, is obviously more photographic than graphic. The obvious change from the "Den" series in artistic manner is negative to me. But then who the hell am I.

For all intent and purpose, I am more concerned with Mr. Corben's success than any quibble I may have over appearance. I hope this will be considered in a constructive way, as I appreciate the works of Corben.

Dave Rohde
Pasadena, MD

Dear HM

I appreciated your Tim Leary interview tremendously. As a sixties rugrat—as are more than a few of your readers—I've always worshipped, for better or worse, the decade that did more to America than any other since WWII—or maybe the Civil War—and Leary was more than there! He was it. While I don't agree with him always—I think LSD is a lot of bullshit, more trouble than it's worth—he's always interesting.

Besides, who is left from the sixties? Lennon, Jones, Hendrix: dead; Wilson, Hoffman, Rubin, Dylan, wrecks or straight (go to church, go to work, make babies); the Stones, Warhol, high society establishmentarians; but Leary carries on. What more need be said? Leary—old enough to be Dylan's father, still at work, at what man considers a "kid's medium:" computers. Incredible.

Speaking of Warhol, whatever happened to him? His "pop art" in a sense made *Heavy Metal* possible. What has he been up to artwise?

Pete Thompson
Stillwell, KS

Ms. Simmons-Lynch, Re: Hopper interview, *HM*, July '83:

Dennis Hopper never could act, as is apparent to anyone who has seen his movies, with the possible exception of *Easy Rider* (a role for which he was obviously type-cast). The burnt-out doper he portrays remains *the* shining example of his "talent." Oddly enough, we saw essentially the same character in *Apocalypse Now*. I wonder why.

If *Easy Rider* (after 15 years of retrospect) is any indication of his ability as a writer/director, I am not surprised that he has done little since then; anything anyone has heard of, anyway. I don't think that the passing years have added anything of substance to this tripe peddler's repertoire, if the content of your interview is to be trusted. The original radical. My Word! The closest he ever came to "radical" was lithium chloride.

If I had it to do over, I would spend the two dollars I contributed to Hopper's career (movie admission in 1969) on another barrel of sunshine; that did more for my head than any bullshit culture hero.

Mal Akins
Denver, CO

JUNE 2050

LISTEN.. YOU GOTTA PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER
SOB!! WHAT'S IT ALL FOR, ANYWAY? LIFE— WHAT A LAUGH! HAHAHA!
"SNIFF"! I JUST DON'T FIT IN! THERE'S GOTTA BE SOMETHING BETTER THAN THIS LOOK, I GOTTA GET OFF NOW
NO! WAIT!
DON'T TRY TO TALK ME OUT OF IT! I'VE ALREADY MADE UP MY MIND!
WAIT!- PLEASE! LET'S MEET AND TALK THEN THEN YOU CAN DO WHAT YOU WANT
I DUNNO
COME ON THE CHIT-CHAT CLUB IN TEN MINUTES, OKAY?
OKAY
HMMM RAIN'S STOPPED SUN'S COMIN' OUT
I'M FEELING BETTER ALREADY. HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SO SELFISH? I'M GOING TO TELL HER HOW SORRY I AM!
VROOM!
ONE WAY
SMASH!
ANGELS
IDIOT! WHY DIDN'T HE WATCH WHERE HE WAS GOING?

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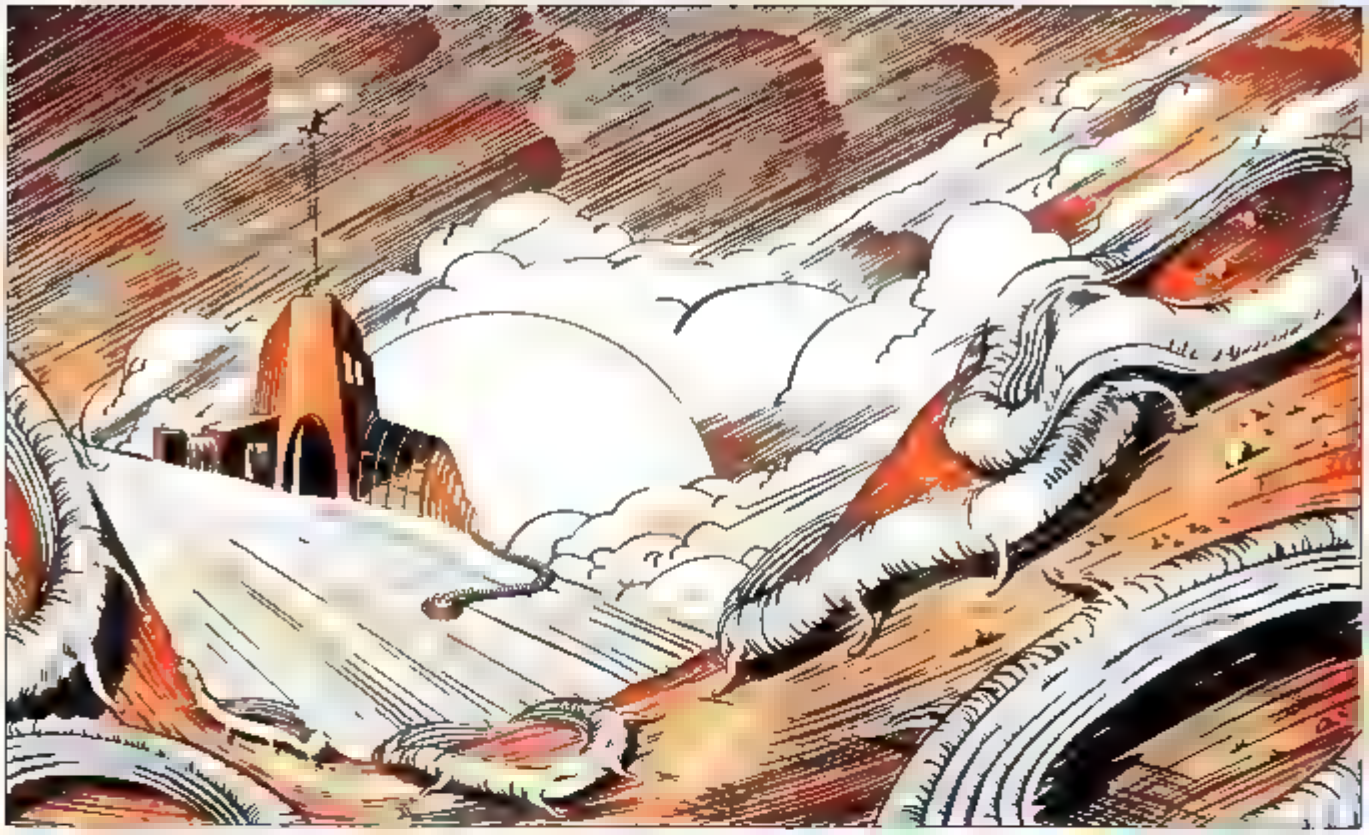

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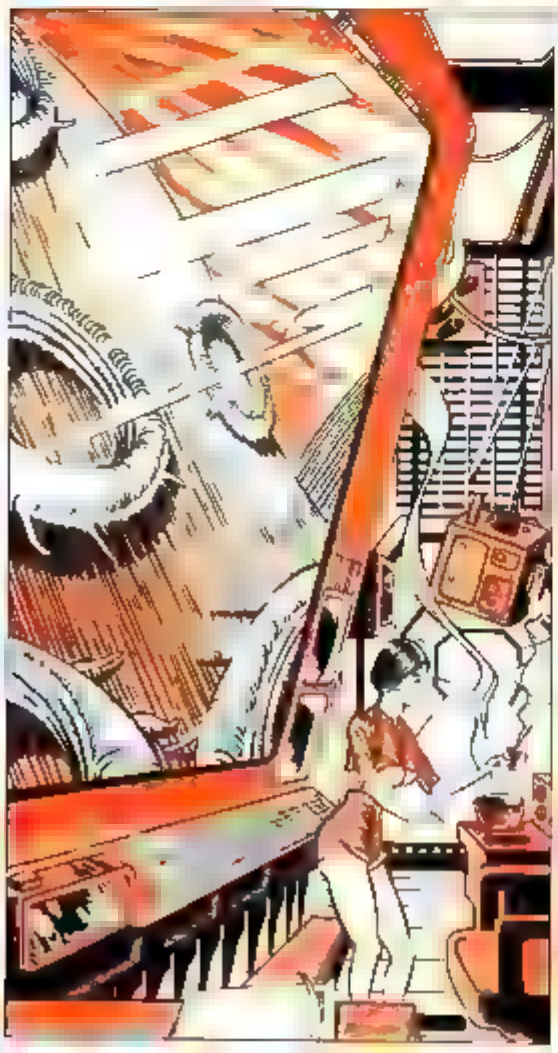
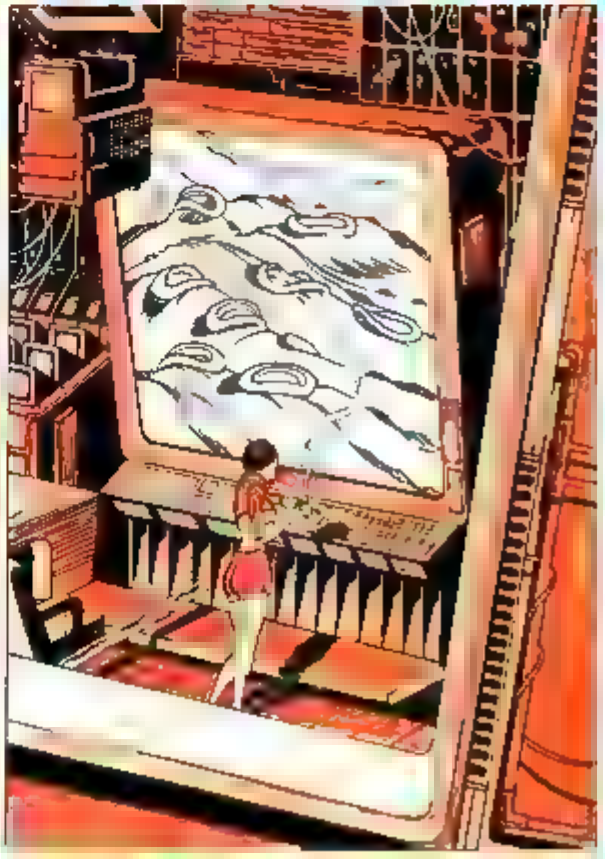
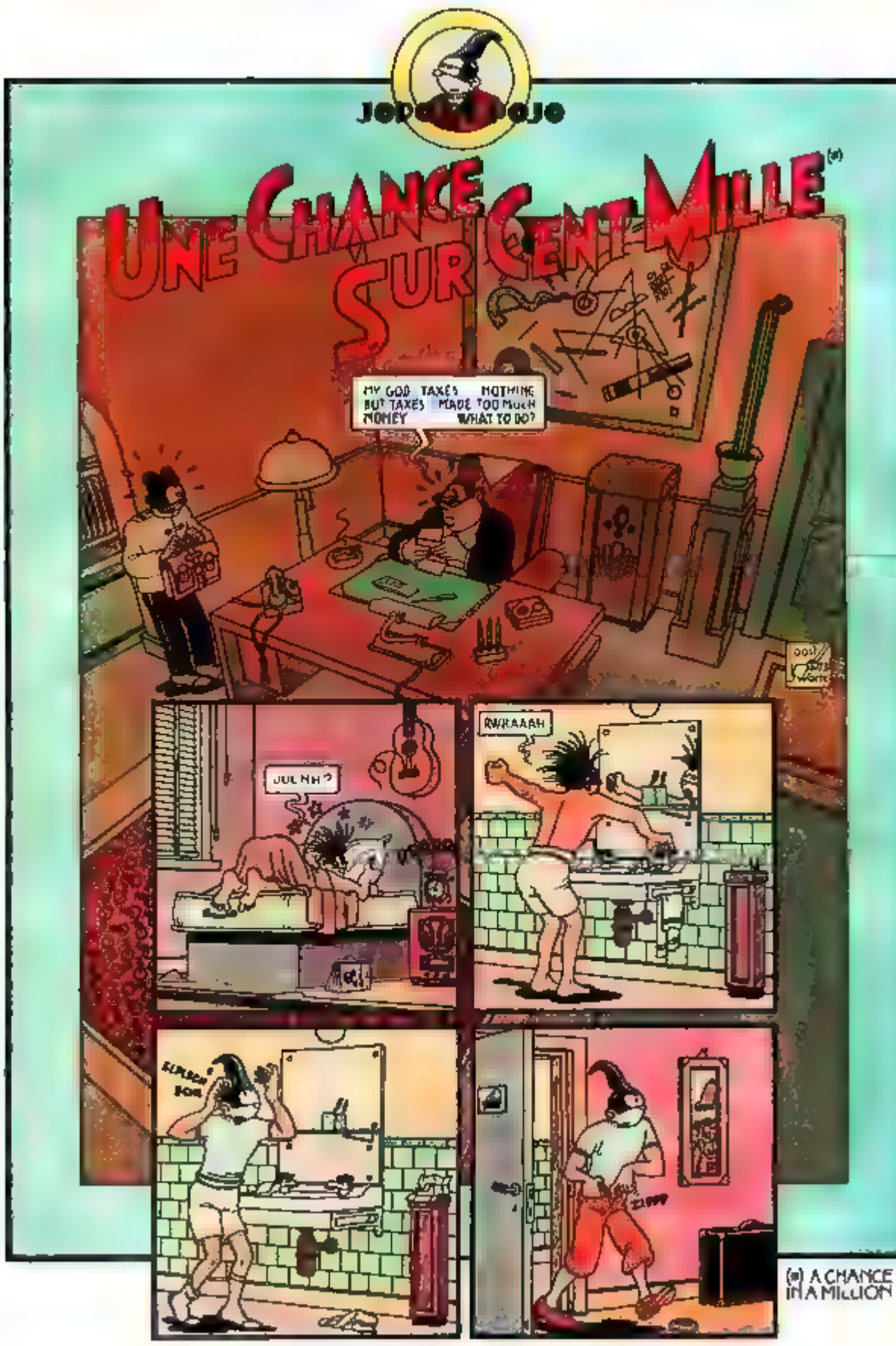
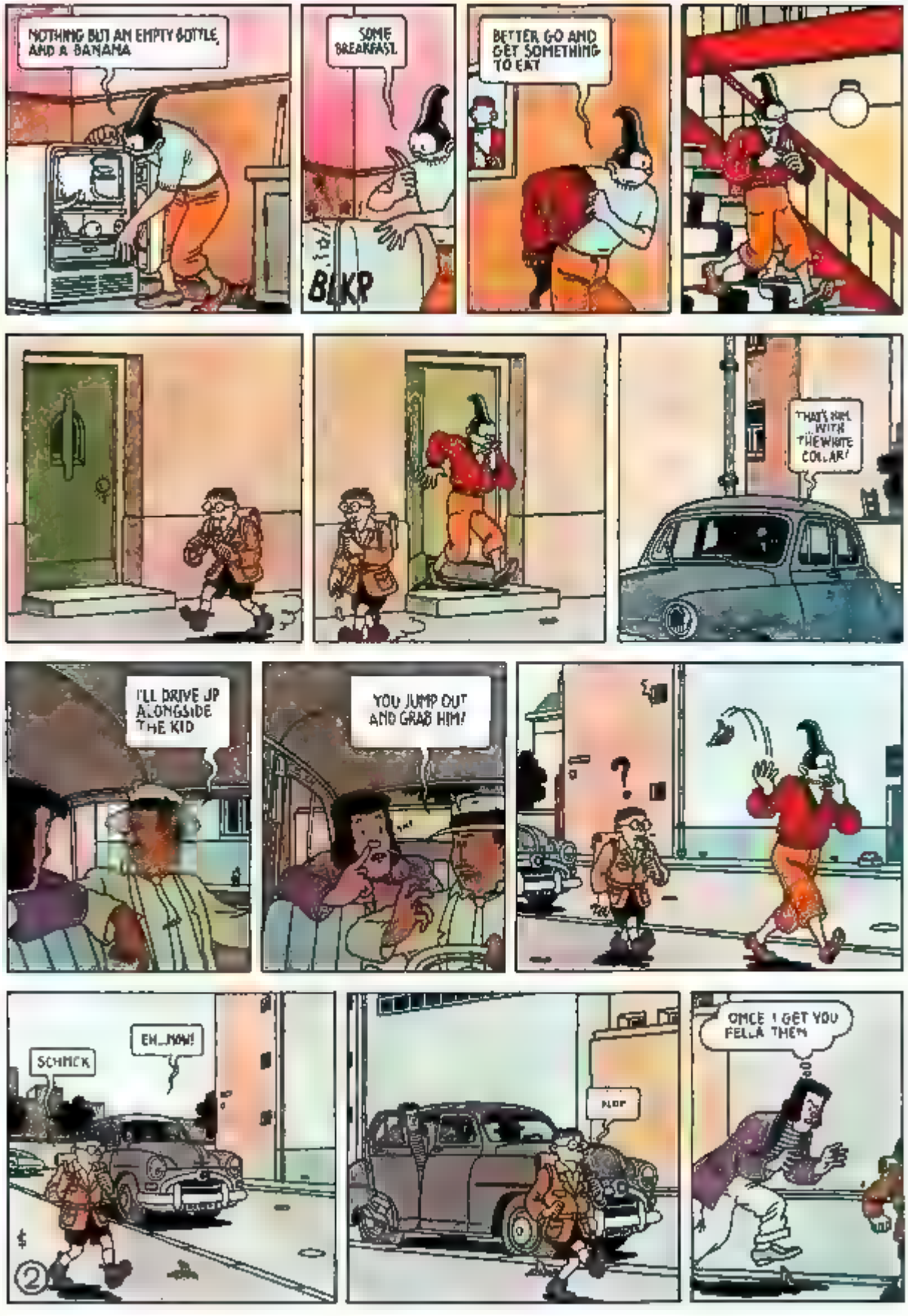


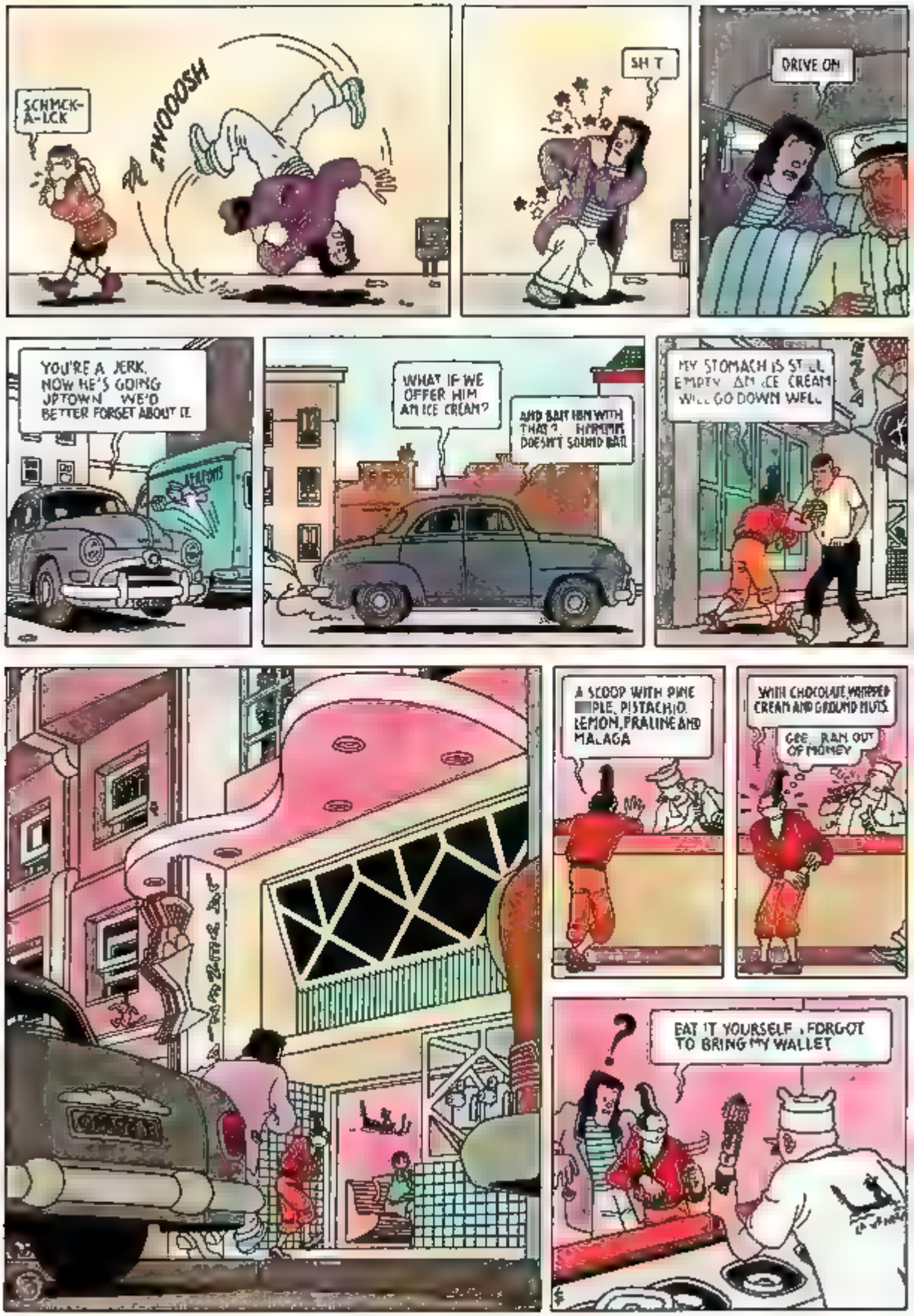


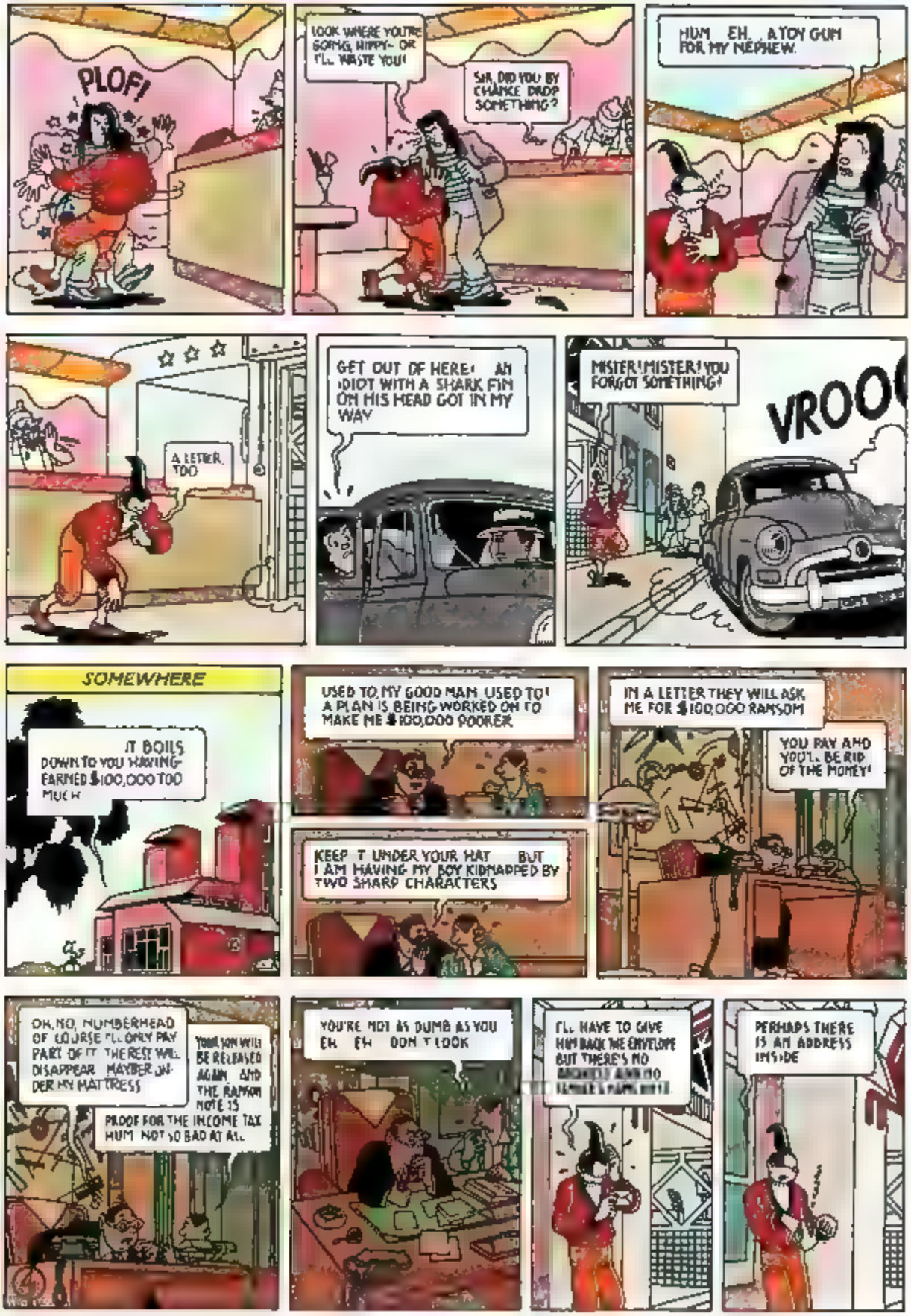
HELLO, TOONLA. EDITH CASSADY AGAIN
THEY'RE STILL MAKING TRIANGLES. TWO
DAYS NOW I'M BAFFLED. ANY IDEAS ?

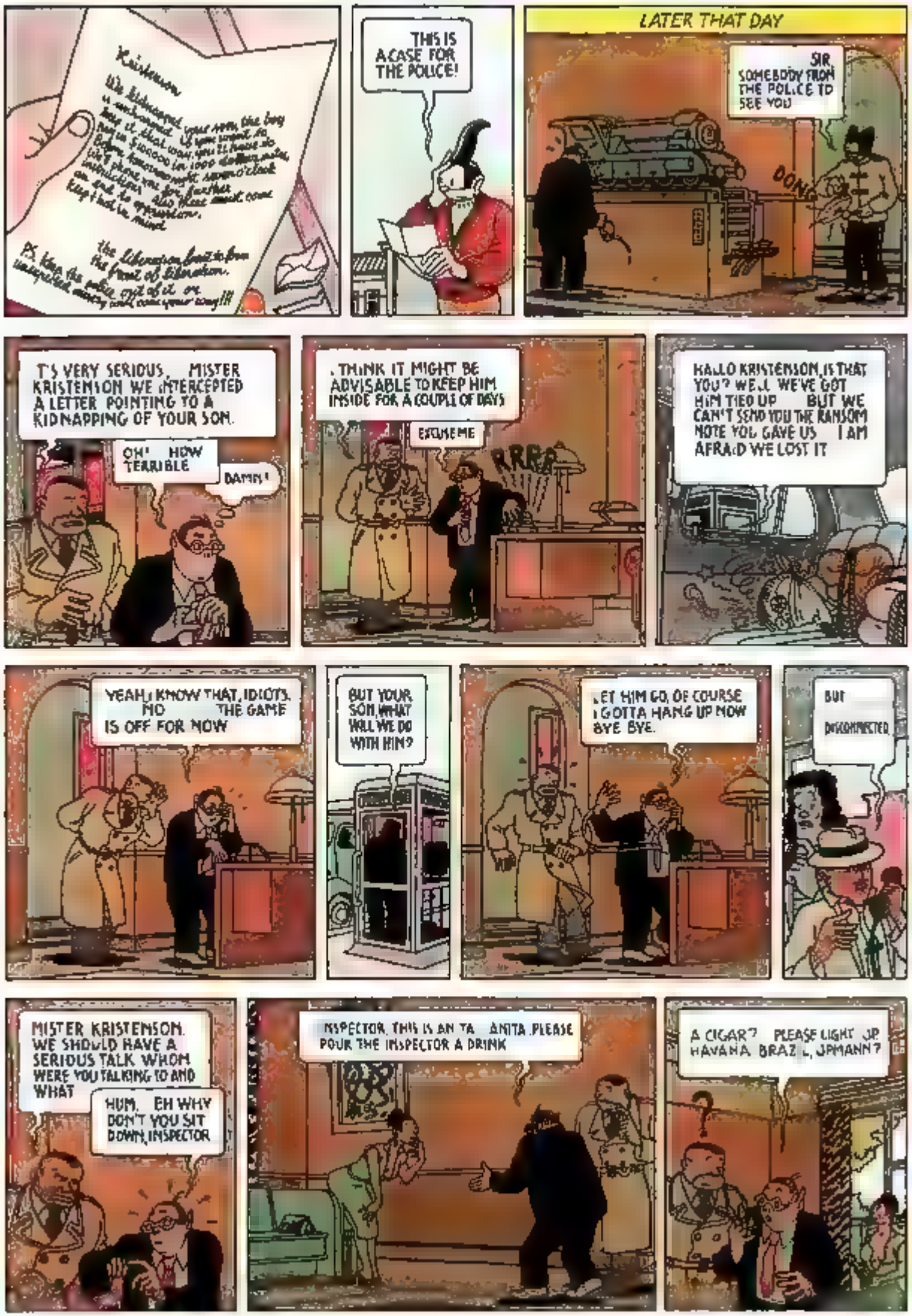
HELLO, EDITH. THIS
IS JACKSON. MAINTAIN
OBSERVATION. CALL US
NEXT WEEK. SO LONG.

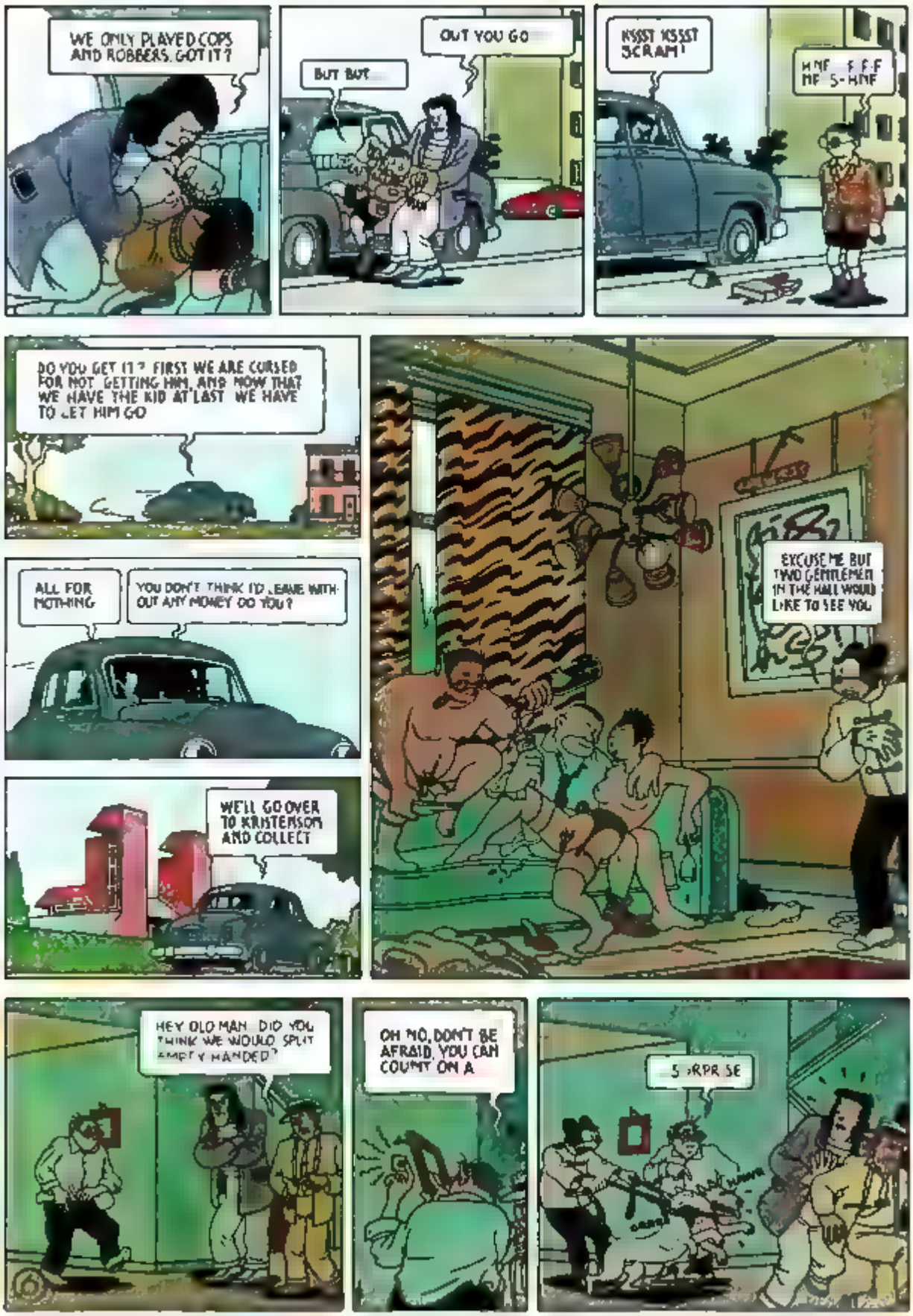

JODOROJO
UNE CHANCE SUR CENT MILLE (a)
MY GOD TAXES NOTHING BUT TAXES MADE TOO MUCH MONEY WHAT TO DO?
JOST
GRRRAAAH
(a) A CHANCE IN A MILLION


NOTHING BUT AN EMPTY BOTTLE, AND A BANANA
SOME BREAKFAST
BLKP
BETTER GO AND GET SOMETHING TO EAT
THAT'S HIM ... WITH THE WHITE COLLAR!
I'LL DRIVE UP ALONGSIDE THE KID
YOU JUMP OUT AND GRAB HIM!
?
SCHNICK
EH...NOW!
$
2
PLOP
ONCE I GET YOU FELLA THEM

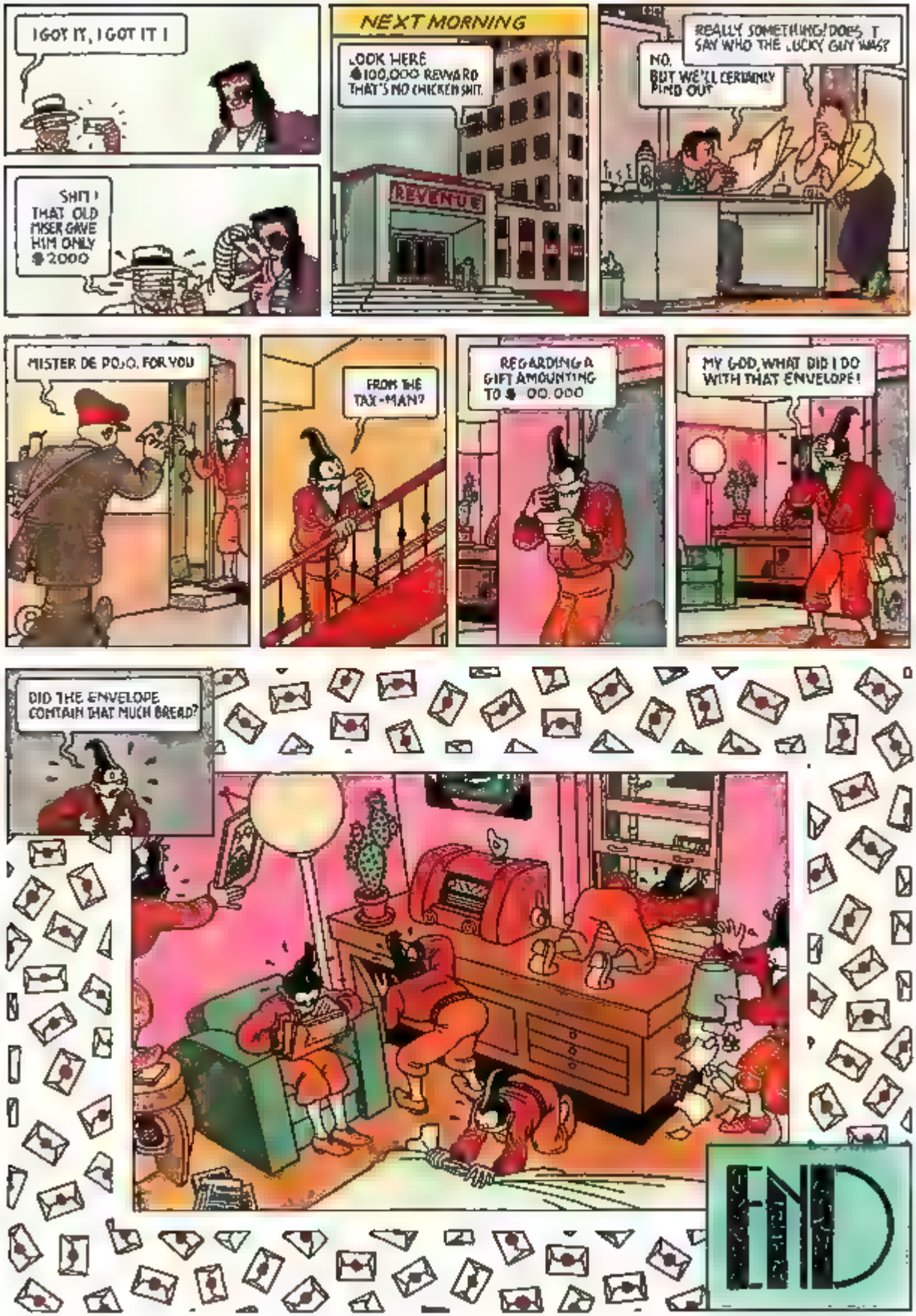

SCHMCK-A-LCK
ZWOOOSH
SH T
DRIVE ON
YOU'RE A JERK. NOW HE'S GOING UPTOWN WE'D BETTER FORGET ABOUT IT
WHAT IF WE OFFER HIM AN ICE CREAM?
AND BAIT HIM WITH THAT? HMMMM DOESN'T SOUND BAD
MY STOMACH IS STILL EMPTY AN ICE CREAM WILL GO DOWN WELL
A SCOOP WITH PINE PLE, PISTACHIO, LEMON, PRALINE AND MALAGA
WITH CHOCOLATE, WHIPPED CREAM AND GROUND NUTS
GEE... RAN OUT OF MONEY
?
EAT IT YOURSELF. I FORGOT TO BRING MY WALLET


PLOF!
LOOK WHERE YOU'RE GOING, HIPPY- OR I'LL WASTE YOU!
SIR, DID YOU BY CHANCE DROP SOMETHING?
HUM EH. A TOY GUN FOR MY NEPHEW.
A LETTER, TOO
GET OUT OF HERE! AN IDIOT WITH A SHARK FIN ON HIS HEAD GOT IN MY WAY
MISTER! MISTER! YOU FORGOT SOMETHING!
VROOO
SOMEWHERE
IT BOILS DOWN TO YOU HAVING EARNED $100,000 TOO MUCH
USED TO, MY GOOD MAN USED TO! A PLAN IS BEING WORKED ON TO MAKE ME $100,000 POORER
KEEP T UNDER YOUR HAT BUT I AM HAVING MY BOY KIDNAPPED BY TWO SHARP CHARACTERS
IN A LETTER THEY WILL ASK ME FOR $100,000 RANSOM
YOU PAY AND YOU'LL BE RID OF THE MONEY!
OH, NO, NUMBERHEAD OF COURSE I'LL ONLY PAY PART OF IT THE REST WILL DISAPPEAR MAYBE UNDER MY MATTRESS
YOUR SON WILL BE RELEASED AGAIN AND THE RANSOM NOTE IS PROOF FOR THE INCOME TAX HUM NOT SO BAD AT ALL
YOU'RE NOT AS DUMB AS YOU EH EH DON T LOOK
I'LL HAVE TO GIVE HIM BACK THE ENVELOPE BUT THERE'S NO
PERHAPS THERE IS AN ADDRESS INSIDE

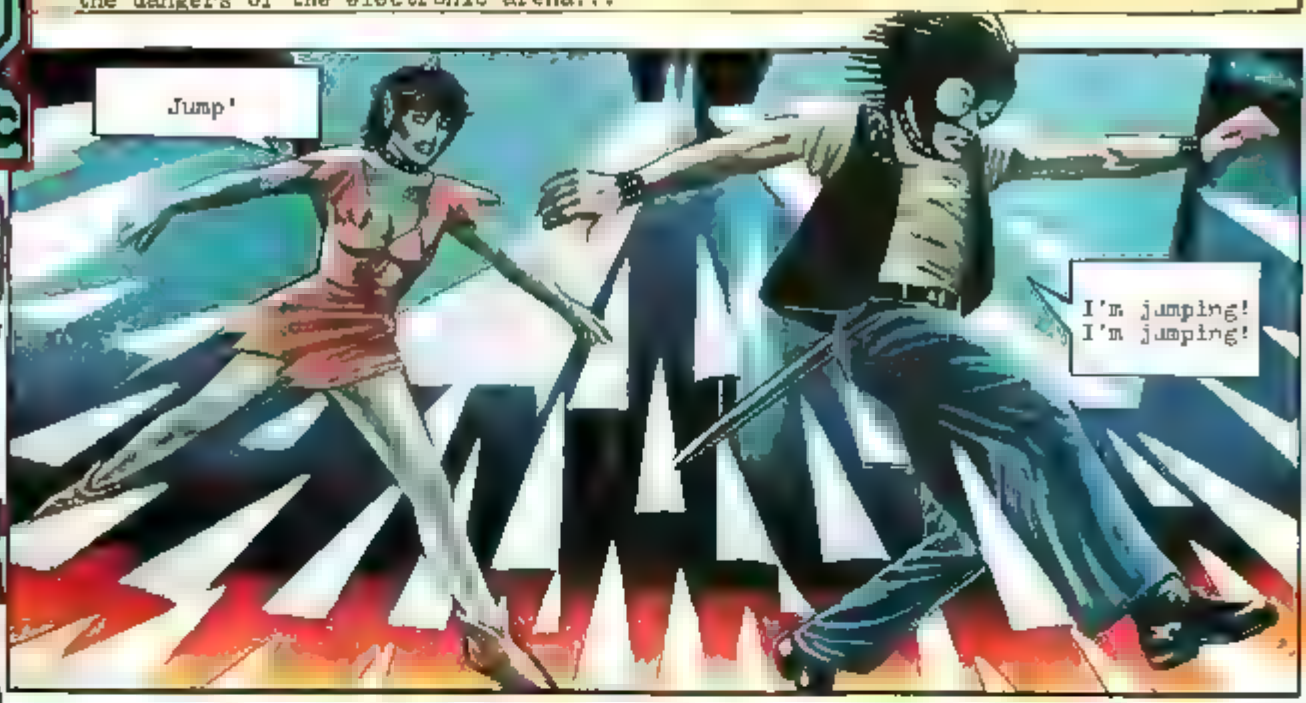

Kristenson
We kidnapped your son, the boy is unharmed. If you want to keep it that way, you'll have to deliver $100,000 in 1000 dollar bills. Further instructions will follow. Any attempt to trick us will be revenged.
The Liberation Front of Liberation.
P.S. Keep the police out of it or unspeakable misery will come your way!!!
THIS IS A CASE FOR THE POLICE!
LATER THAT DAY
SIR, SOMEBODY FROM THE POLICE TO SEE YOU
DONG
IT'S VERY SERIOUS, MISTER KRISTENSON WE INTERCEPTED A LETTER POINTING TO A KIDNAPPING OF YOUR SON.
OH! HOW TERRIBLE
DAMN!
I THINK IT MIGHT BE ADVISABLE TO KEEP HIM INSIDE FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS
EXCUSE ME
RRRR
HALLO KRISTENSON, IS THAT YOU? WE..L WE'VE GOT HIM TIED UP BUT WE CAN'T SEND YOU THE RANSOM NOTE YOU GAVE US I AM AFRAID WE LOST IT
YEAH, I KNOW THAT, IDIOTS. NO THE GAME IS OFF FOR NOW
BUT YOUR SON, WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH HIM?
LET HIM GO, OF COURSE I GOTTA HANG UP NOW BYE BYE.
BUT DISCONNECTED
MISTER KRISTENSON. WE SHOULD HAVE A SERIOUS TALK. WHOM WERE YOU TALKING TO AND WHAT
HUM. EH WHY DON'T YOU SIT DOWN, INSPECTOR
INSPECTOR, THIS IS AN TA ANITA, PLEASE POUR THE INSPECTOR A DRINK
A CIGAR? PLEASE LIGHT UP HAVANA, BRAZIL, JPMANN?


WE ONLY PLAYED COPS AND ROBBERS. GOT IT?
BUT BUT...
OUT YOU GO
KSSST KSSST SCRAM!
HMF... F F F MF S-HMF
DO YOU GET IT? FIRST WE ARE CURSED FOR NOT GETTING HIM, AND NOW THAT WE HAVE THE KID AT LAST WE HAVE TO LET HIM GO
ALL FOR NOTHING
YOU DON'T THINK I'D LEAVE WITHOUT ANY MONEY DO YOU?
WE'LL GO OVER TO KRISTENSON AND COLLECT
EXCUSE ME BUT TWO GENTLEMEN IN THE HALL WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU
HEY OLD MAN DID YOU THINK WE WOULD SPLIT EMPTY HANDED?
OH NO, DON'T BE AFRAID, YOU CAN COUNT ON A
S RPR SE

EMPLOYMENT
PEACE on EARTH
AND IF YOU'LL SIGN HERE, YOU CAN START MONDAY MORNING AT FIVE THIRTY
OI!
KA
ON THE CORNER OF GRENADE STREET AND THREE COST STREET. THE COMPANY BUS WILL PICK YOU UP THERE, AND DRIVE YOU OUT TO THE MINES.
FIVE THIRTY THE MINES ALRIGHT I NEED THE MONEY BUT
HOT DAMN, THERE'S THAT ONE-EARED RABBIT, THAT RIPPED ME UP IN THE ICE CREAM PARLOR
I'M GONNA COOK HIS GOOSE
EXCUSE ME ARE YOU MISTER DE POSO?
WAIT THERE COMES KAISERISON
...THANKS TO YOU MY SON WAS SPARED A TERRIBLE FATE. THANKS TO YOU THE APPLE OF MY EYE STAYED OUT OF THE HANDS OF A RUTHLESS GANG OF CROOKS. AS A TOKEN OF MY ESTEEM, PERMIT ME TO OFFER YOU THIS CLOSED ENVELOPE?!
RIGHT GOT RID OF THE MONEY!
CIGAR? DAMNEMAN?
HOW NICE A LITTLE SOMETHING
THAT ENVELOPE, THAT ENVELOPE WE GOTTA GET IT!
MISTER, COULD YOU TELL ME WHAT TIME IT IS?
...SORRY. HAVEN'T GOT A WATCH... AND THAT CLOCK HAS STOPPED.
THANK YOU! THANK YOU!
?


I GOT IT, I GOT IT !
SHIT ! THAT OLD MISER GAVE HIM ONLY $2000
NEXT MORNING
LOOK HERE $100,000 REWARD THAT'S NO CHICKEN SHIT.
REVENUE
REALLY SOMETHING! DOES T SAY WHO THE LUCKY GUY WAS?
NO. BUT WE'LL CERTAINLY FIND OUT
MISTER DE POO. FOR YOU
FROM THE TAX-MAN?
REGARDING A GIFT AMOUNTING TO $ 00.000
MY GOD, WHAT DID I DO WITH THAT ENVELOPE!
DID THE ENVELOPE CONTAIN THAT MUCH BREAD?
THE END

Synopsis:After my friend Marty had ingratiated himself to Lord Phagsbane with a stand-up comic routine of truly awful jokes,Pixelle and I were left alone to face the dangers of the electronic arena...



OWW!
Well,don't let it go to your head.
Turning a corner,we encountered a truly horrifying spectacle-
--a seemingly endless rain of French intellectuals heaping abuse on us...
Fin d'Impérialisme en El Salvadore!
Notre bande dessinée est merde!

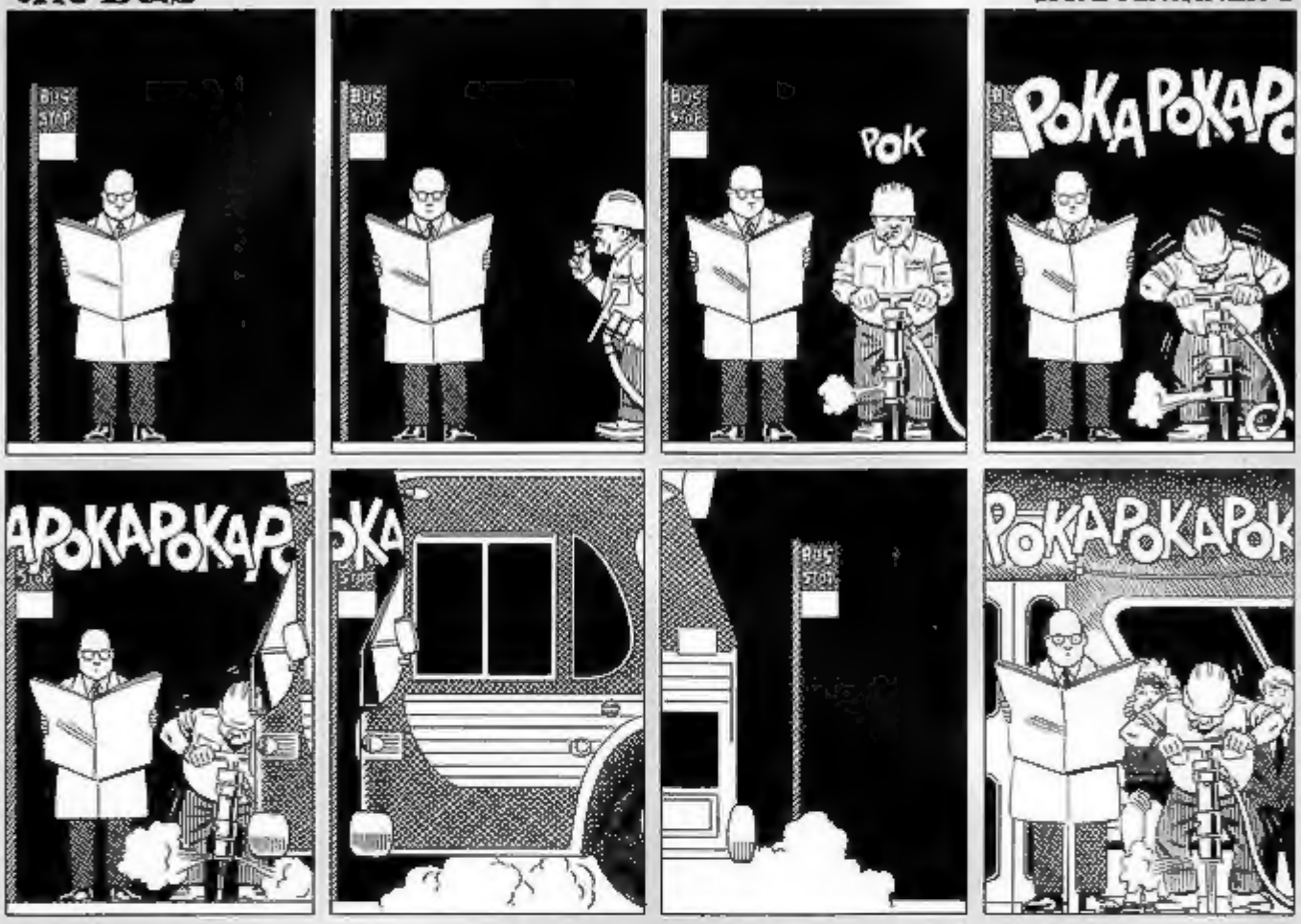
Gochon
well,don't just stand there kill them!
Shouldn't I refute them with irony or something?
No,they don't deserve it -just hack them to pieces!
Hey brother, how ya do?
Some ordeal!We might as well get this stupid "game" over with--what's next?
D Dragon...
Huh?
DRAGON!
Oh,we saw a bunch of those when we landed. They were so small, Marty wanted to use them as novelty cigarette lighters

© 1983 "MONSEWER" ROD KIERKEGARRD, JR.

to be continued...

the bus

PAUL KIRCHNER ©



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